

Antiquities were sold abroad

Britons convicted over theft of 300 Egyptian treasures

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER, MIDDLE EAST CORRESPONDENT

THREE Britons were among twelve people sentenced in Cairo yesterday to prison sentences with hard labour for smuggling valuable Egyptian antiquities out of the country.

Experts said the case had highlighted the continuing threat from art thieves to Pharaonic treasures despite a series of security measures announced recently by Hosni Mubarak, the Egyptian Minister of Culture.

These relate mainly to the 114 poorly maintained warehouses where tens of thousands of ancient artefacts are stored, often without proper inventories.

The three Britons, who were sentenced in their absence, were given between 10 and 15 years' imprisonment with hard labour.

However, the ruling applies only if they re-enter Egypt, in which case they are liable to be immediately arrested.

Legal experts said it was unlikely that any of the men would return to serve their sentences. Conditions in Egyptian prisons are regarded

ed as among the worst in the Middle East. The court was told that a 12-member ring had smuggled ancient artefacts out of Egypt over 18 months.

According to Egyptian officials, about 300 pieces stolen by the gang have so far been recovered. The officials claim it is difficult to maintain security on vast areas holding hundreds of temples and tombs, but they claim to be doing their best with the limited funds that are available.

At the weekend hearing, nine Egyptians, including five senior inspectors with the Supreme Council of Antiquities and a tourist guide, were also sentenced to various prison terms with hard labour.

The trial opened last June. Most of the stolen ancient objects involved in the scandal were the result of regularity with which Pharaonic treasures are uncovered - were later sold in Britain, Switzerland and America, particularly in New

York. The Egyptian authorities are constantly on the alert for efforts to smuggle elements of the national heritage to rich collectors in the West. One Arab diplomat said there was "an insatiable appetite" for genuine Pharaonic artefacts among a circle of rich private collectors in the West.

The nine Egyptians convicted included former senior government antiquities inspectors, the manager of an import-export firm, a taxi driver and a sculptor.

They received sentences with hard labour ranging from five to 15 years. In addition, they were fined the equivalent of US\$150 (£92) each. Three others were acquitted by the court.

The severe lapses in security exposed by the trial were compounded last September with the attempted theft of Tutankhamun's treasure from among the 160,000 artefacts housed in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, which again raised serious questions about the lax fashion in which Egypt's heritage was guarded.

The two-storey museum was found to have no alarms on the hundreds of display cases and no guards patrolling the halls at night.

As a result, Abdel-Halim Noureddin, the German-educated archaeologist who was chairman of Egypt's Supreme Council for Antiquities, was dismissed.

The man who tried to steal Tutankhamun's treasures told police that he had been inspired by the 1966 romantic comedy *How to Steal a Million*, starring Audrey Hepburn as the daughter of an art forger who mistakenly involves a private detective in the robbery of a Paris art museum.



Princess Beatrix and Princess Eugenie leaving their chalet yesterday at the start of their week-long skiing holiday in the Swiss Alps

Yorks in the pink as overdraft goes into the black

THE Princesses Beatrix and Eugenie took to the slopes of Verbier in Switzerland yesterday for a half-term skiing holiday with their mother. The Duchess of York and her daughters are expected to be joined later this

week by the Duke of York. The Princesses, dressed in pink ski-suits and matching helmets and goggles, posed happily for photographs yesterday as they left their chalet at the start of their week-long break. The Duch-

ess was taking her first winter break since clearing her reported £4 million overdraft after a round of highly publicised personal and advertising appearances that were said to have earned her thousands of pounds. She

left for the Continent only hours after arriving back in Britain from a trip to New York to raise money for homeless AIDS victims. One American bid £10,000 to have tea with the Duchess on her next visit to the US.



The Egyptian Government has introduced new security measures to combat the theft of antiquities

Nun's libel claim over BBC show goes ahead

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

AN AMERICAN nun who is suing the BBC for £250,000 over jokes on Radio 4's satirical show *The News Quiz* has won the first part of her action.

Penny Proffit alleges that the show, presented by Barry Took on May 7 last year, falsely implied that she was a fraud, uncharitable and a lesbian nun. In a written judgment, temporary judge Gordon Coutts, QC, said the case could go forward to a full hearing at the Court of Session in Edinburgh.

Mr Took is alleged to have said: "This is Sister Penny Proffit, an unqualified Franciscan nun, who was given £850,000 in nursing research grants before being exposed as a fraud." Dr Proffit, who lives in Garvald, East Lothian, resigned as Professor of Nursing Studies at Edinburgh University in 1992.

Mr Coutts said in his judgment that it could not reasonably be suggested that there was no imputation of dishonest conduct in Mr Took's statement, adding: "It seems to me to be inescapable that the 'unqualified' and 'uncharitable' against the pursuer is plain."

James Taylor, solicitor-at-law for the BBC, said *The News Quiz* was a humorous satirical programme. "No reasonable listener could have taken the dialogue complained of seriously," he said.

Head lied about degrees and set up fake law firm

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

A PRIMARY school headmaster who lied about his qualifications deceived a Lancashire village for three years.

Alistair Beeston, 36, enjoyed a £23,000-a-year post looking after 70 pupils at the village school in Nether Kellet. But he had also set up a bogus law firm at the school, using the ruse to allow him to take expensive cars for test drives.

His deceptions were discovered only when the school's deputy head realised that he had changed the name of the payee on various cheques. After calling in the police, the school found that Beeston had a previous conviction for dishonesty and had faked his honours degree.

The full tale of his three-year deception unfolded at Lancaster Crown Court on Friday, when Beeston was jailed for three months for fraud. He admitted obtaining £71,000 (his salary) from the school by deception, three cheque deceptions and using cars by deception.

Beeston, from Cruxeth, Liverpool, was described as an "intelligent and capable" man who had taken over Nether Kellet school in 1991 after telling education officials he had a master's degree in education and diplomas in teaching, humanities, maths and science. In fact, he had only a BEd, the basic teaching qualification. Several months

after he took over, teachers became puzzled at phone calls asking to speak to a law firm bearing Beeston's name.

In fact, he had invented a firm called Beeston, Clark and Gensland, giving the school's address, to enable him to test-drive company cars by pretending he was trying them out for the firm. It was only when Sue Jobbins, then deputy head, noticed a cheque for a school trip had been altered by Beeston that her suspicions were fully aroused.

Joyce Mace, chairman of governors at the school, said yesterday that everyone had been taken in. "When I found out, I was very angry and frustrated. He was appointed in good faith and he betrayed our trust, both as a head teacher and a friend."

Tony Marechal, a parent with four children at the school, said: "It was a real shock when it all came out. He was totally convincing. When we first moved to the area, we met him and he was full of enthusiasm and ideas. We came away thinking, 'What a good chap.'"

Lancashire education authority said yesterday: "As a result of this we are checking job applicants' claims most thoroughly. We have been the victim of a common who abused his position, but we have no reason to fear the children in his charge suffered."

Clean-living farmer steps up the pace a little at age of 107

By TIM JONES

A MAN aged 107 was yesterday planning to drive a Land Rover around his 1,000-acre farm after being given a new lease of life by a heart pacemaker.

David Henderson is Scotland's oldest man, and runs his cereal farm from his nursing-home bedroom at Laurencekirk, Kincairdineshire, from where he can see his crops grow. He has no plans to retire and attributes his longevity partly to hard work, abstinence from smoking, and a daily diet of porridge.

But, he says, the main

secret is never to go to bed on a full stomach: "I was told that by an uncle who, also lived to a ripe old age, and I have always stuck to it."

He was born in 1889, when the great Forth Railway Bridge was still being built. He remembers working during the First World War for the Earl of Kintore, and receiving instructions to increase production to help the war effort.

"In those days, strikes were a problem but we stopped them and got on with it. It is now rather ironic to think we now produce far too much food which leads to huge surpluses," Farming, he says, has

changed hugely since he began. "At one time, I employed 15 or 16 men, but now there are only three or four," he said.

Mr Henderson and his wife Elizabeth never had children, but took delight in adopting orphaned animals. He admits that while maintaining an input into the daily running of the farm, he could not cope without the help of his nephew, Doug Cargill.

In spite of his entry in the record books, Mr Henderson is not entirely happy. He said: "I can't understand why I am the oldest man in Scotland. It is not a very good position to be in."

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The American Association Resistance to HIV discovered in two infected men

REPORTS FROM NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR, IN SEATTLE

TWO men who recovered after being infected by the AIDS virus HIV are giving scientists clues that could lead to better treatments for the disease.

The cases were described by Professor Miles Cloyd of the University of Texas at Galveston at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

He believes that the ability to shrug off the infection documented in these two cases may explain why many haemophiliacs and intravenous drug-users remain free of HIV infection despite exposure to the virus. He has shown that the resistance is the result of a gene found in as many as one in six people.

However, protection is limited to one strain of HIV, not all varieties of the virus. Well-documented cases of recovery are very rare, and several involve babies born to HIV-infected women in which there are doubts that the babies were ever really infected.

Professor Cloyd says that his data is the strongest evidence yet in adults. In one case, a man living with an HIV-positive partner was infected with HIV, which was demonstrated both by antibody tests and by detecting the viral genes using a sensitive technique called polymerase chain reaction (PCR).

When he was tested again four months later he proved clear and he was checked for a further 18 months with no sign

of infection. The immune-system cells of these men were tested against the same strain of HIV in a test tube and found to be relatively resistant to them. They could be infected, but only by large doses. Further experiments showed that the virus was entering the cells but was then unable to copy itself and its advance was halted.

The results suggest that people possessing the newly found form of resistance block

HIV at a step in the virus's life cycle called integration, when the virus inserts a DNA copy of its genetic blueprint into the host's genetic material, or when fresh viral ribonucleic acid (RNA) is made from the inserted DNA.

The process is quite different from that of another natural mechanism to block infection, reported last year, and appears to be twice as common in the population. When Professor Cloyd tested the ability of HIV to reproduce in immune cells taken from 50 healthy volunteers, he found that one in six were resistant.

He also found that the resistance was shared by different members of families in a way which showed that it was attributable to a gene. In families where one parent was susceptible and the other resistant to a particular HIV strain, children were like the father or the mother. In families where both parents were susceptible, so were the children.

The strain of HIV used in the experiments and found in the two patients who recovered is one usually transmitted by blood transfusion or by sharing needles, not by sex.

"We can't say for certain whether this process accounts for real-life cases where someone was exposed to HIV but didn't get sick, but I think it does," Professor Cloyd said. "If we can figure out how these genes can stop infection or the disease, it may be possible to make a drug that will mimic the effect."

Supertasters find good health hard to swallow

SUPERTASTERS — people who are particularly sensitive to bitter tastes — may be harming themselves by avoiding fruit and vegetables that contain health-giving but bitter compounds.

A study at the University of Michigan presented at the conference has shown that about a quarter of women fall into that category, while another quarter were non-tasters, blind to bitter flavours. Supertasters have more taste buds than average, experience tastes more strongly and have greater sensitivity to pain and to the "mouth-feel" of food. They find chili peppers hotter and fatter creamier.

Dr Adam Drewnowski, director of the human nutrition

programme at Michigan, said: "Supertasters are highly sensitive to bitter taste and tend to reject bitter-tasting foods. Many anti-oxidant flavonoids that are so important for cancer prevention are either bitter or occur in bitter-tasting vegetables and fruit."

After treating 400 women volunteers with a bitter laboratory compound he found that those who rejected its taste disliked sharp and bitter foods in general, including naringin, a compound that is the principal bitter ingredient in grapefruit juice.

"Like other flavonoids, naringin helps inhibit cancer-causing compounds in the body and has potential chemotherapeutic value," he said.

Supertasters may refuse to eat a variety of foods containing such substances, which include the isothiocyanates found in vegetables such as broccoli or Brussels sprouts.

"People who are supertasters should be aware that some of their eating habits are not the result of simple dislike but are genetically determined," Dr Drewnowski said. "They should also be aware that they may be disguising or moderating bitter tastes by covering vegetables with extra butter, cream, or a cheese sauce, thereby introducing more fat into their diets."

To cater for those who do not like the bitter taste of broccoli, "sweetener" versions have been bred and are now sold in British supermarkets. But such varieties lack the very ingredients that make eating greens a healthy option.

The importance of fruit and vegetables was emphasised at the conference by Professor Bruce Ames, of the University of California at Berkeley, who said that the quarter of Americans that ate the least fruit and vegetables had twice the incidence of most cancers than the quarter that ate the most.



This time it's serious: Steven Bennett at Salford University. He hopes to launch the first amateur rocket to break the sound barrier

Thunderbirds are gone as the amateur rocketeer becomes an urbane spaceman

By PAUL WILKINSON

STEVEN BENNETT grew tired of being called a "backyard boffin" and "eccentric English inventor" in his efforts to launch his own spacecraft. Today he will test-fire the top section of his latest rocket with more serious ambitions.

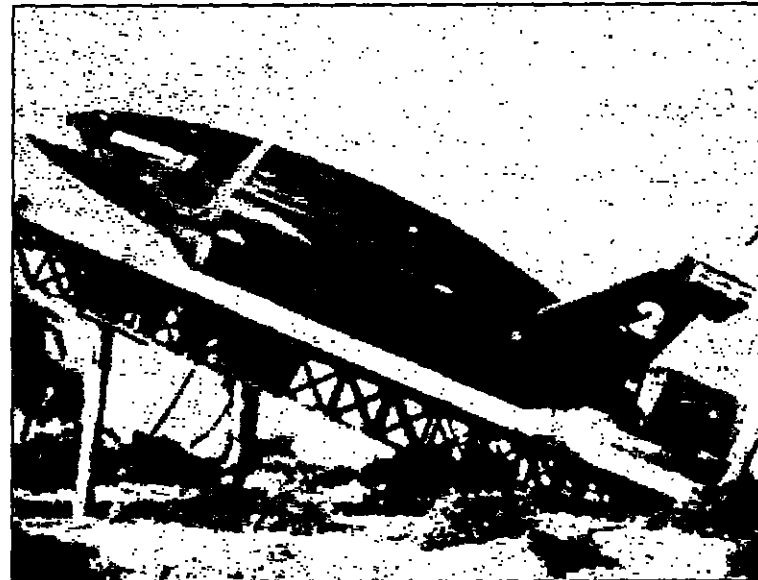
Mr Bennett, 32, now hopes to become a world leader in the growing business of putting commercial satellites into orbit. He said: "Now we are going to be more professional. It is going to be suits and ties from here on."

The space enthusiast admits that he was turned on to the subject 20 years ago by the TV puppet show *Thunderbirds*. His original ambition was to be the first amateur to put a rocket into space — technically, 50 miles up.

His Starchaser rockets, assembled in his garage in Duckinfield, Manchester, and powered by a fuel based on the old schoolboy explosives mixture of weedkiller and sugar, made him the butt of media jokes. One failed launch 15 months ago from a cow pasture in North Yorkshire brought the wry headline "Skipton, we have a problem."

A year ago, after the successful launch of Starchaser 2 from the Army's ranges at Otterburn, Northumberland, his race to beat teams from Australia and California seemed to have run out of energy. His sponsor, Tate and Lyle, pulled out, preferring the eccentric hairstyle of the chef Garry Rhodes to promote their sugar. Mr Bennett faced an end to his ambitions.

Now he feels older but wiser: "We sat down and decided that enough



Inspiration: TV's *Thunderbirds* began Mr Bennett's quest. Now he is aiming to launch small satellites at half the going rate

was enough, no-one was going to take the micky. Frankly, all that we did before was just publicity which has helped us get to the place we are now."

Today he has another sponsor, Pearson New Entertainment, which is using his rocket to promote the latest US-made sci-fi TV series *Lexx*, due for release on video, Channel 5 and BSkyB later this year. He also has an £80,000 deal with Salford University, which runs its own space sciences course.

He now heads The Starchaser Foundation, with a team of 15 technical experts working on matters

such as computer guidance systems and rocket propulsion. He said: "The foundation's aim is to inspire and enrich the society and economy of our nation by contributing towards a permanent British presence in space." People who join the foundation for £10 receive information and progress updates on the project.

Mr Bennett still hopes to be the first amateur into space, but he wants eventually to set up what he calls "a mini-NASA". He said: "Any of the big state groups, like the European Space Agency, can put a satellite the size of a car into space, but there is no one really in a position to put up payloads

of around 50 kilos, such as university experiments or private communications or weather satellites.

"The cheapest anyone can do it today is around £500,000. We expect to be able to do it for at least half that. We will tailor our rockets to suit the customer's payload and, by adapting off-the-shelf components, we will be able to do it cheaper."

Today's launch at Otterburn will test the on-board computer, but it is expected to set new records. It should be the first time an amateur rocket breaks the sound barrier and he hopes it will reach a record altitude in excess of three miles, taking only 30 seconds to do it. Parachutes will bring it back to earth ten minutes later, a predicted nine miles downrange.

This spring, the fall three-stage rocket Starchaser 3, now named the *Lexx*, will be launched in Northumberland. At 22ft, it is only slightly taller than its predecessor, but its 11 motors and new fuel make it ten times more powerful.

Mr Bennett reckons it will take just 79 seconds to set a new record at 15 miles high: "That will be the last one we can launch in this country. There is just not enough room to bring it back down safely." He has been examining launch sites in Sweden and Kenya for his future space shots. His aim is to put a small satellite into Earth's orbit in July 1999, to coincide with the 30th anniversary of the moon landings.

"It will broadcast a suitable radio message from whoever sponsors it — a sort of celestial advertisement boarding," he said. "It will show those who are interested that we mean business."

Samaritans short of volunteers as calls rise

THE Samaritans today launched a campaign to attract 10,000 new volunteers to cope with a 23 per cent rise in calls in the past decade (Dominic Kennedy writes).

The £100,000 campaign, supported by Marks & Spencer, TSB and Whitbread, will be the largest since the Samaritans was founded in 1953. It has also been prompted by an 8 per cent decline in helpers during the past two years.

"More volunteers are urgently needed so we can meet

the increased demand on our service with confidence," said Simon Armon, the charity's chief executive. He said that the number of calls had risen due to an increased public awareness of the service. "It is also possible that people are simply under more pressure."

Volunteers need no previous experience and must be able to commit at least three hours a week and an overnight shift once a month. Volunteers should call a helpline: 0990 627252.

Why children never know it's time for bed

EVERY parent has experienced it (Paul Wilkinson writes). You tell the children it's time for bed and hours later they are still up, yet they claim they have only just told them.

Now researchers at Hull University have been awarded £140,000 by the Economic and Social Research Council to examine how children perceive and organise their time. With the assistance of the sociology department of Goldsmiths' College in London they will explore the expecta-

tions which parents, teachers and other professionals have of the ability of children aged 10 to 12 to organise and manage their time.

The team will interview children in rural and inner-city areas and hope to produce guidelines for people working with children and suggestions for the development of after-school activities. Dr James also hopes that long-suffering parents will understand why the instruction "do it now" often falls on deaf ears.

Ageing Chipmunk flies into the sunset

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

THE Chipmunk trainer that has served the Army and the RAF for the past 50 years is to leave the colours this summer — after a final trail-blazing flight to America.

Three de Havilland-designed and built Chipmunks, painted in full RAF colours, will fly across Russia, Canada and the US to open up a new overland air corridor.

The three single-engined Chipmunks — flown by two RAF pilots and one from the Russian airforce — will make dozens of stops at remote airfields, many of which were out of bounds during the



Golden days: the first Chipmunk flew in 1946

Cold War, preventing private pilots throughout Europe from taking part in air rallies in America because they did not have the range to cross the Atlantic. Although the Chipmunk has a normal range of little more

than 200 miles, there are now undergoing modifications to enable them to fly 500 miles.

The Chipmunk, which first flew in 1946, replaced the Tiger Moth as the RAF's basic trainer and became a firm favourite among mili-

tary pilots around the world. In all, 1,283 were built.

The aircraft was particularly popular among the thousands of university students and air cadets who took their first steps towards a flying career at the controls of a Chipmunk. Both Prince Philip and Prince Charles learnt to fly on the Chipmunk, which has two seats in tandem and flies at a maximum speed of 125 mph.

Last year the RAF ruled that the venerable Chipmunk no longer met modern military regulatory standards and had to be retired. It has been replaced by the Bulldog.

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Oxford considers course fees as first step to privatisation

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

OXFORD is to examine a call by senior dons that it should charge students course fees of up to £8,000 as the first step in proposals which ultimately envisage the privatisation of the university.

The academics, including Robert Stevens, Master of Pembroke College, believe the university could preserve its traditions of independence and excellence by rejecting government funding worth £70 million a year. This would leave undergraduates paying means-tested course fees of between £3,000 and £8,000, with a range of bursaries to help the less well-off.

In an open letter to Peter North, Oxford's Vice-Chancellor, Dr Stevens and nine other dons argue that course fees and hence the "partial privatisation" of university funding are inevitable. A further step they want explored is whether the university should pull out of government funding altogether. The letter, drafted by

Peter Milfield, a Law Fellow at Jesus College, concludes: "We believe there has been far too little discussion in the university of the option of becoming independent."

"It may be said in some quarters that even to discuss this issue is to increase the risk of funding cuts. This does not make much sense to us. As a responsible institution we must plan far ahead."

The group believes an independent Oxford would have little problem attracting government money for research work if it rejected public funding for undergraduates and charged fees. They added: "There is no logical reason why students should not be funded partly publicly, partly privately as they are at Harvard, Yale and Princeton."

It argues that full autonomy would help to save the university's collegiate and tutorial systems, put under threat by successive government funding squeezes, as well as main-

tain academic salaries. The proposals will be considered as part of Dr North's commission into Oxford's future direction, which is likely to be concluded this summer. Dr Stevens said yesterday that they were made "reluctantly but realistically" and could be considered in extremis. Pembroke was among those poorer colleges finding it financially very difficult to maintain the small teaching groups that underpin Oxford's tutorial system.

The London School of Economics is the only British institution to plan for course fees from next year. However, many universities, including Oxford and Cambridge, will carry a warning in their 1998 prospectus that fees may be charged if the Government's review of higher education, which reports in the summer, does not help to solve a growing funding crisis.

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Tina Russell, who plays Claire Toomey, with Cordelia Bugeja, who plays Melanie Hart in *Family Affairs*. Channel 5 hopes a pacy plot will win a younger audience

Channel 5 soap aims to bridge generation gap

By ALEXANDRA FREAN, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

CHANNEL 5 hopes a family called Hart will help it to capture a crucial share of the soap opera market when it launches next month. *Family Affairs*, billed as a mixture of teenage angst and middle-age passions, will be broadcast every day.

The broadcaster wants its soap to have a younger feel than ITV's *Coronation Street*, a more upbeat mood than BBC's *EastEnders* and less sensationalist plots than Channel 4's *Brookside*.

The characters include Annie Hart, 42, a woman from a middle-class family who has a strong sense of humour and a passion for sex. Bored with being a silent partner in her husband's building firm, she sets up her own interior design company.

Her husband Chris is the son of a miner from Newcastle. His snooty mother-in-law Elsa, who is driven by a desire to appear in *Hello* magazine, has never accepted him as being good enough for her daughter.

Her daughter Melanie,

who has a close friend, Claire Toomey, is a Spice Girl clone. Her brother Duncan will embark on an affair with their mother's best friend. Their grandfather lives in the attic.

"It is *Dynasty* without the shoulder pads," said Mal Young, executive producer. The programme would differ from other soaps because it was centred around three generations of one family rather than around a place.

It will, say the makers, be characterised by pacy editing. At least six plots will be interwoven into the narrative at any one time. Its success will be crucial to the whole of Channel 5, which goes on air on March 30. Soaps generate both high ratings and high advertising revenue.

A hit soap will also entice viewers to stay with the channel for an entire evening and can build viewer loyalty over a period of years. But as Mr Young, the former producer of *Brookside*, knows, most soaps fail. Notable disasters include *Albion Market*, *Eldorado* and *Castles*.

Howard under fire over plan to tag parents

By JAMES LANDALE AND RICHARD FORD

THE Home Secretary was criticised yesterday for his plans to impose curfews and electronic tags on parents who failed to take responsibility for tearaway children.

Civil liberties groups, probation officers and penal reformers broadly welcomed Michael Howard's plans to put pressure on parents to help to prevent their children becoming hardened criminals. But they said tagging parents went too far and could put children at further risk.

Labour accused Mr Howard of stealing their policy of encouraging greater parental responsibility. But Jack Straw, the Shadow Home Secretary, stopped short of criticising parental tagging and said only that it raised questions.

Tory sources said tagging would occur only in extreme cases and would not be imposed on parents who were unable to cope with their children. The plans will be published in a Green Paper in the next two weeks and are likely to be contained in the Tory election manifesto.

The move comes after publication last year of an Audit Commission report that said the £1 billion youth justice system was ineffective. Mr

Howard originally considered changing the law so that children under 10 could be charged with a criminal offence. He has ruled that out and instead wants to get parents more involved.

Under the scheme, a panel would identify unruly children under ten who played truant, were seen drinking or taking drugs or committed petty crime. The "crime diversion groups" would encourage parents to take more responsibility for children, such as taking them to school, spending time with them at weekends and keeping them at home in the evenings.

If the parents refused to co-operate, magistrates could impose a "parental control order". Magistrates could fine them up to £1,000, impose community work and, in extreme cases, a curfew.

John Wadham, director of Liberty, said tagging parents was wrong in principle and unlikely to be successful in practice. "Forcing parents to stay at home when they want to go out and forcing them to stay with their children is not likely to make them better parents. In fact, it may mean they take their aggression out on their children."

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BALLOT 97

THE TIMES GUIDE TO ELECTION ISSUES

5. Higher education

Degree of silence on a £6 billion problem

THIS page is devoted to an issue not likely to feature in the television soundbites, poster themes and headlines which define the colour and content of a general election campaign.

Considering the stakes involved, the omission is odd. Britain's sprawling university network costs more than £6 billion a year to run and we are the only major country in the world devoting as much as a fifth of the nation's education budget to higher education. But the major political parties some time ago reached a tacit agreement that a committee of inquiry into the scope, funding and purpose of our university system would not report until this summer. Sir Ron Dearing, once chairman of the Post Office and now the Government's education guru of choice in time of

trouble, will not render judgment until June.

Political debate about higher education is suffocated by a taboo which has long since ceased to inhibit those who actually run and teach university courses. After two decades of rising student numbers, inadequate public funds and amalgamation with what were once polytechnics, universities are facing hard choices over how they generate income from sources other than the Exchequer. University vice-chancellors have said that they may require students to contribute towards the cost of their tuition as well as their maintenance.

Vice-chancellors may confront this, but political parties back away. The possibility of middle-class backlash against paying fees for their children's university tu-

ition generates powerful political phobias. On the fundamental question of whether university teaching should or should not remain free to most students, the division is not between the parties but between Westminster and academe.

While tip-toeing round tuition fees, both main opposition parties have produced schemes for re-financing student maintenance which involve students paying more towards their own upkeep. Labour suggests sweeping up present loans and maintenance grants into a single loan which would be repaid by graduates over perhaps 15 to 20 years. This version of a "graduate tax" would lengthen the five-year repayment schedule for current loans. The Liberal Democrats would establish individual Learning Accounts financed

THE POLITICS

at a basic level by the State but which would allow students to borrow additional sums.

For the foreseeable future, higher education policy will emerge from the tension between quantity and quality. Whatever the precise boundary between public and private finance, governments will set at least the broad standards which define degree courses and influence the proportion of the population which can take them by setting the extent of subsidy available.

Balancing quantity and quality requires a view about what universities are for. The election of 1979 inaugurated a fresh search for evidence on how much higher education contributed to the na-

tional wealth, social mobility or general happiness. Researchers set off into the jungle of statistics and prejudices but have not yet returned with clear conclusions. For the first time since the Robbins Report of the 1960s, Sir Ron Dearing has been charged with imposing some order on the chaos.

In the absence of agreement about how many graduates Britain needs, instincts prevail. Arguments for shrinking higher education are not heard: differences are between standing still and expansion. Weary of the struggle to wean students and their parents off public funds and still coping with the consequences of a surge in numbers, the Government is trying to check the expansion, arguing that demand for graduates is slackening. Labour, quoting the 60 per cent

university participation rates in America, says that many more people deserve the chance to go to university and that the money can be found from a new version of the ailing student loan scheme.

Many university teachers would say that government faces more urgent issues. The abolition of the distinction between polytechnics and universities has left the country with a mass higher education framework co-existing with an older, smaller, elite system. At one end of the scale stand Oxford, Cambridge and the most powerful civic campuses; at the other stand struggling institutions still not much more than what one of John Le Carré's characters calls "polys in drag".

Sir William Taylor, former Vice-Chancellor of Hull, starkly

describes the system as "out of control".

Most rational planning suggests that the bigger the higher education sector becomes, the more varied its universities must be in specialisation, quality and quantity of research, prestige, sources of finance and character. British universities show a persistent wish to imitate elite success. Universities ill-equipped to do so try to ape the great seats of learning by embarking on ambitious research and spreading their resources too widely. The new trend, which concentrates the bulk of research funds among a small fraction of Britain's 97 universities, has given rise to claims that an elite "Ivy League" is being assembled by stealth and the arrival of "Ivy League angst" in less well-endowed institutions.

High price paid for university expansion

DURING the past 18 years, higher education has undergone revolutionary change which can be captured in a single statistic. In 1979, one young person in eight went through university; nowadays almost one youngster in three does so. The academic growth was once the preserve of a small elite and is no longer.

The debates and decisions of the past 18 years have been dominated by the Government's determination to curb the rise in the cost of universities and the dawning realisation that a system split between polytechnics and universities did not work. The next phase of decision-making must cope with the consequences, both intended and unintended, of merging the two kinds of institutions. And as government has radically altered the structure of the university system and shrunk its public funds, students and their demands have changed. Women, traditionally under-represented at universities, now make up almost half the student body. There are now almost as many part-time, mainly mature students as young entrants to full-time degree courses. But universities remain a middle-class preserve: students from what opinion pollsters call occupational classes D and E are hardly more likely to take a degree than they were ten years ago.

The Further and Higher Education Act of 1992 allowed 41 polytechnics and colleges to retitle themselves as universities. Doubling the number of universities has increased the range of choice for individual students but centralised control of the entire sector. When Margaret Thatcher came to power in 1979, university funding was centrally controlled by the now-defunct University Grants Committee, but polytechnics were run by local authorities. Now the Higher Education Funding Council for England holds the purse strings of the whole system. Higher education has been nationalised.

The most consistent charge levelled at government ministers throughout these years has been the impoverishment

THE RECORD

of teaching institutions. While the exact effects may be in dispute, the financial squeeze was very plainly laid out by a group of university administrators and Whitehall civil servants reporting to the Secretary of State for Education last summer. In the past eight years alone, while public funding for universities and colleges has increased by 25 per cent in real terms, the expansion of student numbers has cut funding per student by 30 per cent, with a further 10 per cent cut due over the next two years. Funds from charities and industry have made up little of the gap.

The average student-staff ratio ten years ago was about 10:1; last year it had risen to 16.5:1 and the report cites universities claiming ratios of 20:1 and 25:1. The report highlights the points where the system is under greatest strain: shortages of medical equipment and places, out-of-date information technology and problems keeping libraries stocked. The CBI last year underlined the need for students to learn basic skills of communication, teamwork and problem-solving which they fear will suffer as the amount of face-to-face teaching declines.

Fifteen years ago, the idea of student loans generated bitterly acrimonious division and hopes for rescuing higher education from ceaseless arguments over money. The controversies have died and the hopes have been dashed. A Tory government has suffered the political embarrassment of going into the banking business and the managerial embarrassment of failing to privatise the operation. The Student Loans Company has outstanding loans of more than £1 billion and has told the National Audit Office that £142 million is unlikely to be recovered. Banks are extremely wary of getting involved. Both main political parties would love Sir Ron Dearing's committee to present them with a workable proposal to replace the loans fiasco.

Sir Ron is said to be tempted by the examples of Australia and Japan. Australian student loans are made by a government fund to which employers contribute voluntarily. Students also pay some of their tuition fee. They can pay this in advance, or after their course through the taxation system, giving them longer than the steep five-year repayments for British loans. The Japanese Government has created more entry and exit points in its system. Japanese students have to pay substantial course fees, without help from a government loan scheme, for a four-year degree at university. They can also take two-year college degrees and go on to university for a further two years for a full honours degree.

Education officials in Britain have expressed interest in combining the approaches: state funding for two years of study with loans being easier to make and repay when students are well established on courses and keen to complete their degrees.

Cost and quantity are relatively straightforward to audit: judgments about quality are more elusive. By one crude measure of quantity, Britain had more graduates per head



Elevation of the polytechnics has left a small, elite system co-existing with a mass higher education framework

of population than any country in the European Union except Denmark when the OECD last counted in 1992, although both Japan and America had still more. A system to rate universities for their research has led to complaints that academic quality cannot be compared across disciplines and that emphasising numbers of publications leads to more books and articles of lower quality and less time devoted to teaching pupils. Can the don taking a tutorial in Aristotelian philosophy at Oxford be directly compared to the lecturer teaching "golf course management" at the University of the West of England?

Worry about standards is diffuse but persistent. The Department for Education and the universities are still wrangling about the creation of a "quality agency" and the measurement of both teaching and research remains invidious and controversial — not least because some academics refuse to accept that they do something which can be calibrated at all. University authorities resent the lowering of A-level standards which requires them to teach students who should still be at school.

This worry lies behind the gentle pressure which universities exert to expand some degrees from three years to four. Retiring from Manchester University, Sir John Mason said: "The decision to expand higher education before attending to the school system was like adding an extra story to a house with crumbling foundations."

Twice during the past 18 years, the Government has tried to link the demand for degrees to demand in the economy for particular qualifications. The system was abandoned for reasons illustrated by the saga of supply and demand for mathematics and engineering graduates. Industry says that it wants mathematicians and engineers, but science and engineering are generally less well paid than other occupations.

Despite the small numbers of A-level students taking mathematics and science combinations, universities expanded their places for these subjects. They found them hard to fill and some were forced to take under-qualified students.

Apart from the problem of finding enough mathematics and science teachers, there is

not much evidence of a shortfall where people are needed for science-based careers. The moral of the story seems to be that universities find it hard to reshape people's choices in line with the economy's demands.

But the helter-skelter expansion of universities will have its own effect on choices. An unprecedentedly large number of students is being sucked into a higher education system that has never closed a weak university, when funds and energy might be better concentrated on further education and vocational courses. Technical further education, ever the Cinderella of the British education system, might be the truly deserving beneficiary of savings made by charging students for tuition.

With degrees no longer a rarity, white-collar employers must find other ways to select their employees. Possession of a degree is no longer something special. That is perhaps the deepest and most lasting change of the past 18 years: universities have gained a lot of students and lost much of their magic.

Next week: social security

LORD HENLEY

Age: 43

Education: Clifton and Durham University.

Family: two sons, one daughter.

Experience: the 8th Baron Henley, lord of Scalesby Castle in Cumbria, qualified as a barrister soon after leaving university, served as a county councillor and became a government whip in the Lords in the late 1980s. Has held a series of low-level ministerial jobs representing departments



in the Upper House. Politics: loyal, mainstream shire Tory. Performance: safe pair of hands.

BRYAN DAVIES

Age: 57

Education: Redditch High School, University College London.

Family: two sons, one daughter.

Experience: schoolteacher, polytechnic lecturer. Sat as MP for Enfield North for five years until 1979. Came back as MP for Oldham Central and Royton only to have his constituency abolished by boundary changes. At present seatless but is likely to be parachuted into



one at the last minute. Politics: Centre Left, not a natural Blairite. Performance: quietly effective, popular.

SIR RON DEARING

Age: 66

Education: Doncaster Grammar School, Hull University, London Business School.

Family: two daughters.

Experience: left school at 16 to work in employment exchange. Became Whitehall civil servant, chairman of Post Office in the 1980s and indispensable member of numerous boards and quangos. Now chairman of the Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority.



Politics: saintly. Otherwise unknown. Performance: skilful seeker after compromise but not a bold innovator.

We have done two things that, taken together, will prove a terrible blow to the quality of our higher education: we have tripled the number of students without providing the means; and we have expanded universities on the basis of inadequate schools.

George Weiden, MP

The present system which allows any student with minimal qualifications to follow any course or mixture of courses without regard to intellectual or vocational quality, utility, social or economic need, and at taxpayers' expense, is unsustainable.

Sir John Mason, recently retired Vice-Chancellor of Manchester University

The Government considers student demand alone to be an insufficient basis for the planning of higher education. A major determinant must also be the demands for highly qualified manpower.

Kenneth Baker, Secretary of State for Education, 1998

The solution is, as many in all political parties are beginning to recognise, to denationalise our universities; to abolish the Higher Education Funding Councils and to establish a direct link between the students, the tuition fees that they pay and the institutions to which they pay them.

John Ashworth, former director, London School of Economics

CONSERVATIVES



Vision: higher education raises workforce skills, brings benefits to the economy, has wider social and cultural benefits and promotes individual and personal development.

Numbers: demand for graduates will be outstripped by supply in the year 2000. Numbers of people in higher education should also be influenced by "rate of return to the nation's investment". Awaiting guidance from Dearing on whether student numbers should grow, and if so by how much, after next three years of stable numbers.

Student grants and loans: charging for tuition ruled out. Balance between grants and loans for maintenance being shifted further towards loans.

University finance: money per student to drop to 72 per cent of 1990-91 level by 1999.

LABOUR



Vision: 21st-century societies require high-skill workforces developed by increased access to universities. Economic prosperity and social justice demand no less.

Numbers: raise the country's sights to the CBI target of 40 per cent of young people taking degrees, America's 60 per cent and Korea's aim of 100 per cent. Government underestimates demand.

Student grants and loans: replace present mixture of grants and loans with a graduate contribution scheme. Risks for collection of student repayments will be transferred to private sector to keep the expenditure out of the public sector borrowing requirement.

University finance: gains from new graduate contribution scheme will finance planned expansion of numbers.

LIBERAL DEMOCRATS



Vision: expand access to degree courses without damaging quality. Match Japanese, American and German graduate output. System should adapt to a "lifelong learning culture".

Numbers: should follow demand. Students from EU and central Europe to be particularly encouraged.

Student grants and loans: Individual Learning Accounts financed by the State could be topped up by loans to be paid back later. Parental contribution to be abolished and support to be extended to all students, whether full- or part-time and in both higher and further education.

University finance: levels to be agreed with funding councils. Campuses deserve better staff-student ratios, computers and libraries.

□ Average spending per student per year in higher education is almost exactly the same in Britain and France: the rate of expenditure is twice that level in Germany.

□ 18-year-olds today have a nearly 60 per cent chance of going to university, either straight from school or later in life. In 1900, the chance was 1.2 per cent.

□ British student drop-out rates have fluctuated between 14 and 18 per cent over the past ten years.

□ Between 1990 and 1994, the proportion of graduates obtaining a first class or upper-second class degree increased from 48 to 50 per cent.

□ In 1993, 14 per cent of new graduates did not find work within six months of graduation.

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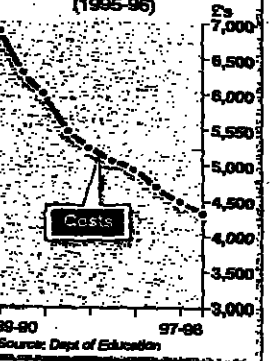
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COST PER STUDENT (1995-96)



ating: a total of 20,000 people. By the following year, the figure was down to 10 per cent as the economy came out of recession.

'Stately old homo' backs call to abort gay babies

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

QUENTIN CRISP, who once referred to himself as one of the "stately homos of England", has called for gay fetuses to be aborted because he believes the world would be better without homosexuals. The flamboyant author who inspired the award-winning play *The Naked Civil Servant*, said he often wished he had not been born.

He supported calls from James Watson, the Nobel prize-winner who discovered DNA, for women to be allowed abortions if a "gay gene" was discovered that could be detected in the womb.

Mr Crisp, speaking from the bedside in New York where he lives in self-imposed exile, said he had been unhappy with his sexuality since he was six years old.

"I got teased by my brothers and my sisters and so on because I was so conspicuously absurd," he told *The Times*. "I was swanning around the house saying, 'Today I am a beautiful princess'. What could people say? At public school of course I never had a moment's rest. Everyone was



Crisp: often wished he had never been born

always laughing at me. I was bad at games at school and that's a terrible disadvantage."

Mr Crisp said he was in the "gay gene" must be because you are homosexual so early. I don't think anyone wants to be homosexual. If it can be avoided, I think it should be. Life is so hard, especially in England.

"The idea that homosexuals are more talented is absolute nonsense... being homosexual, you are just standing on

the bank watching other people swim. You are placed in a position where everything you do is bizarre, especially sex acts. Really your body is not what you wanted it to be."

Mr Crisp says he has been celibate for half a century. "By the time you are 40 you are an old person. I am 88. By the time I was 38 I had given up sex."

He acknowledged that the call to abort homosexual babies would enrage gay-rights activists. "They are so angry about everything. I do know why they are angry, because they are unsatisfied," he said. "I avoid them myself." He had no idea whether his mother would have wanted him aborted. "She of course must have known I was homosexual. Who could avoid it?"

His call for the eradication of gay unborn babies came after Mr Watson told *The Sunday Telegraph*: "If you could find the gene which determines sexuality and a woman decides she doesn't want a homosexual child, well, let her."

The National Abortion Campaign yesterday defended a woman's right to choose,

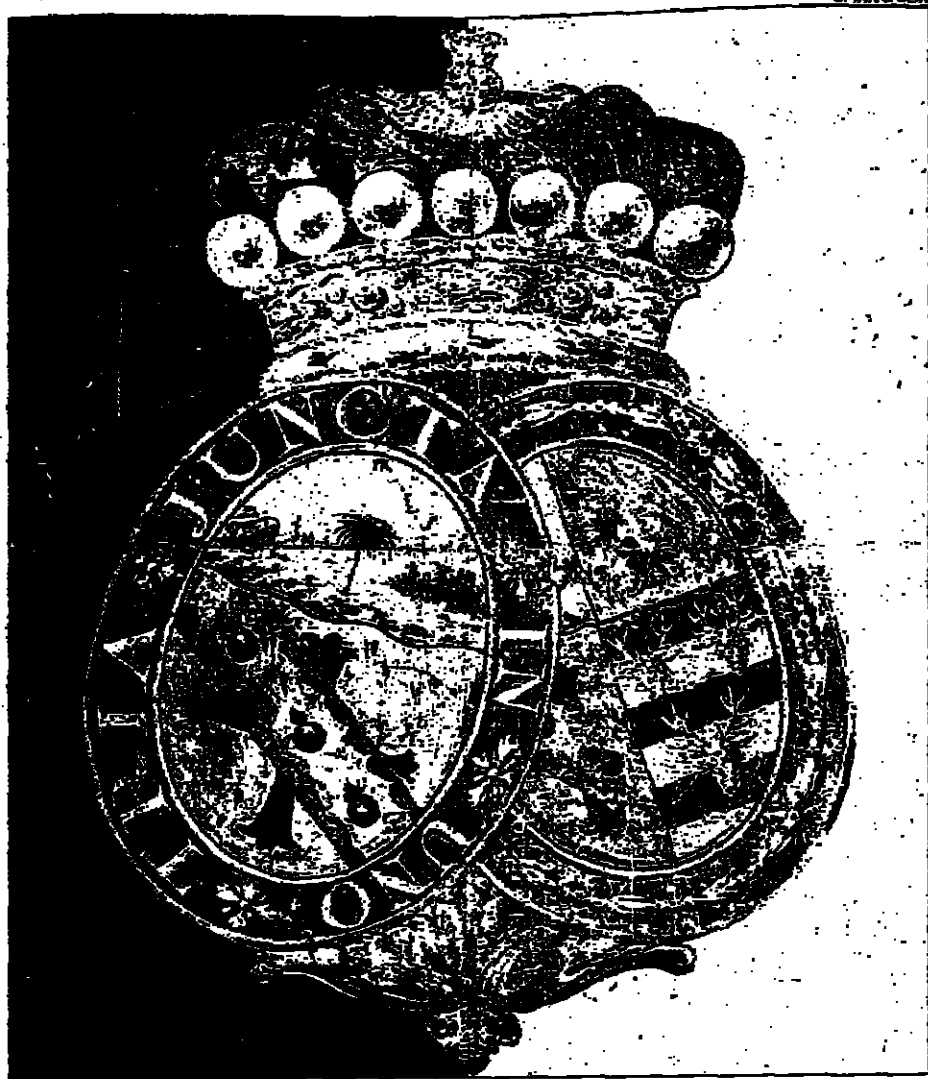
even if that meant an abortion because a child would grow up to be gay. Anne Marie Keary, who chairs the campaign, said: "I trust women to make good decisions."

Elizabeth Szewczyk, who chairs Support around Termination for Abnormality, said she had never heard a woman say she would take such a step.

Only 2,000 of the 180,000 abortions a year in Britain are performed because the baby would have an abnormality. Tests are available for conditions including Down's Syndrome and spina bifida.

Josephine Quintavalle, of Comment on Reproductive Ethics, said: "They are going to be looking for more and more aspects of our human nature to identify to try to create the baby without flaws. They have talked about a schizophrenic gene as well. It is a horrifying development."

Angela Palmer, deputy director of Stonewall, the homosexual rights campaign, said: "It is pretty outrageous. If you had a child who was healthy in every other way but there was a possibility he or she might be gay, it would be awful to terminate."



The painted silk panel from the 1806 funeral carriage of Lord Nelson

Nelson's funeral tribute returns

By JOHN SHAW

ONCE it was the focus of thousands of mourners along the streets of London to St Paul's. Now a silk panel which decorated the funeral carriage of Lord Nelson in 1806 is returning to the capital for sale after more than a century in Australia.

The panel in the shape of a ship, is expected to fetch up to £30,000 at Spink on March 18. The announcement coincides with the 200th anniversary of the Battle of St Vincent in February 1797, the first of four great victories culminating at Trafalgar in 1805, when Nelson was killed.

The silk crests of Nelson and his widow's arms measure 23in by 18in. The carriage was exhibited at the Royal Hospital for Seamen in Greenwich, but was later broken up. The panel — originally one of six — was acquired by Dr Charles Davies, a collector of books and memorabilia who emigrated to South Australia in February 1840. It is being sold by a descendant.

Ghost of Who's Tommy returns to receive award

By HELEN JOHNSTONE

THE West End musical *Tommy*, which was forced to close last month after rave reviews fell on deaf ears, has won a Laurence Olivier Award as the most outstanding musical production. The show by Pete Townshend, lead singer of The Who, beat two productions by Andrew Lloyd Webber.

Townshend's transformation of his 27-year-old rock opera into a family musical opened at London's Shaftesbury Theatre last March, following a successful Broadway run. Within months, it became clear that the story of the deaf, dumb and blind boy who becomes a rock messiah was not building a following on this side of the Atlantic. However, its short run did revive interest in the music of The Who. *Tommy* had been a worldwide hit as a double-album rock opera in 1969.

The show lasted long enough for two of its stars —

Kim Wilde, who played Tommy's mother, and Hal Fowler, who played cousin Kevin — to fall in love and marry. It also brought stardom to Paul Keating, 20, a former shelf-packer at Tesco, who had won the title role.

The strong faith of Pete Townshend and his cast in the show was not shared by The Who's singer Roger Daltrey, the album's *Tommy*, who felt the aggression of the original was lost in the stage musical.

Another success at the 21st Laurence Olivier Awards in London last night had begun with bad reviews from the critics but went on to win audiences with a relaunch. The musical *Martin Guerre* was financed by the impresario Sir Cameron Mackintosh, whose decision to spend £500,000 on a revamp — including some new music — paid off when it won the American Express Award for Best New Musical.

American Express Award for Best New Musical: *Martin Guerre* (Prince Edward Theatre)
Outstanding Musical Production: *Tommy* (Shaftesbury Theatre)
Best Actor in a Musical: Robert Lindsay for *Oliver!* (London Palladium)
Best Actress in a Musical: Maria Friedman for *Passion* (Queens)
Best Actress: Janet McTeer for *A Doll's House* (The Playhouse)
Best Actor: Antony Sher for *Stanley* (RNT's Cottesloe)
BBC Award for Best Play: *Stanley* by Pam Gems
Best Director: Dee McAvitt for *Tommy*
Best Comedy: *Art* by Yasmina Reza
American Express Award for Best New Musical: *Martin Guerre*
Best Actress in a Supporting Role: Deborah Findley for *Stanley*
Best Actor in a Supporting Role: Trevor Eve for *Uncle Vanya*
Best Supporting Performance in a Musical: Clive Rowe for *Guys and Dolls* (RNT's Oliver)
Best Theatre Choreographer: Bob Avian for *Martin Guerre*
Best Set Designer: Tim Hatley for *Stanley*
Best Lighting Designer: Chris Parry for *Tommy*
Best Costume Designer: Tim Goodchild for *The Relapse* (RSC's Pit)
Best New Dance Production: English National Ballet's *Cinderella* (London Coliseum)
Outstanding Achievement in Dance: Dancers of Rambert Dance Company for season at the London Coliseum
Best New Opera Production: English National Opera's *Tristan and Isolde* (London Coliseum)
Outstanding Achievement in Opera: Elgar Howarth for conducting ENO's *Die Soldaten* and the *Prince of Homburg*
Laurence Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement: Richard Eyre
The Special Award: Margaret Harris

Theatres 'disregard' younger audiences'

By DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

ONE of Britain's leading directors yesterday accused the Royal Shakespeare Company and Royal National Theatre of failing to invest in audiences of the future. Michael Bogdanov, who has worked with both companies, urged them to follow the example of overseas national theatres in staging large-scale, mainstream productions specifically for children.

Mr Bogdanov, co-founder of the English Shakespeare Company, pointed to Denmark, which has seven national theatres, each with a remit to produce at least two plays a year for children. He said the RSC and RNT showed a "disregard" for children under 12, who probably comprised one-fifth of the population. When it came to

large-scale productions, children were offered little more than pantomimes, he said. He contrasted Russian and east European actors, who viewed working with children as a "vital" experience, with their British counterparts, who saw it as part of "getting your training".

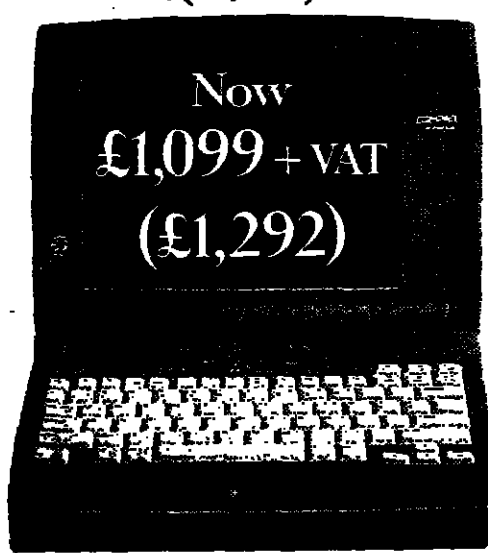
His company has launched a policy of touring productions for children. It is to begin with a six-month tour of *Beowulf*, which opens at the Oxford Apollo on March 5. It is aimed primarily at 8- to 12-year-olds — the age group he believes is least protected for.

The RSC denied his claims yesterday. "We already have a fairly significant education programme, which this year is in the process of being doubled," a spokesman said.

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How wildest Tibet was mapped by yak and coracle



Hanbury-Tracy in a monastery during the expedition

By DALYA ALBERGE
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

PHOTOGRAPHS from a 1935 expedition to the remotest area of eastern Tibet are to be exhibited for the first time. They record the adventures of 25-year-old John Hanbury-Tracy, who, with the backing of the Royal Geographical Society, went in search of the source of the Salween River. With his friend, Ronald Kaulback, who died last year, he travelled across an unexplored, unmapped terrain. The river, he wrote, was "full of whirlpools and rapids where no boat can survive". The first Europeans to enter the area, for nearly two years they had no contact with the outside world. They had set off in February 1935. By January of the next year, however, the cold — so intense that it was almost impossible to work their delicate survey instruments with any accuracy — and war in China forced them to turn back. However, they had already mapped 25,000 square miles and brought back numerous specimens of plant and insect life. Local people had thought they were hunting for gold. They also brought back photographs, which are to be lent by Hanbury-Tracy's daughter to this year's Art and



Forgotten world: three faces of eastern Tibet that will be shown at the Art and Antiques Fair in London

Antiques Fair at Olympia, London, from February 25 to March 2. Hanbury-Tracy, who died in 1971, published the story of his trip in *Black River of Tibet* in 1938. His first expedition after Cambridge was to Lapland. After Tibet his appetite for exploration took him to the Andes. He saw the Salween as a mysterious river. In an unpublished account, unearthed by his daughter for the fair, he

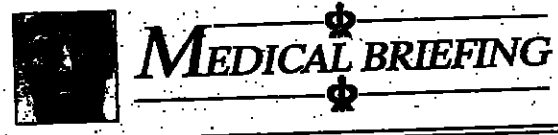
wrote about the first stages of their journey through the hill jungles of northern Burma, and 18 days on foot through the Kachin Hills before Putao became their "last contact with newspapers, telegraphs and telephones, or any form of wheeled vehicle for nearly two years". One route, he noted, was "only 100 miles as the crow flies, but it takes over three weeks of strenuous travel".

Describing his first sighting of the Salween, he reported: "We had been riding all day in a tearing wind, muddled in our Tibetan sheep-skin clothes, experiencing the first dead dry cold of a Tibetan winter, the cold of the loftiest plateau on earth. The words of Coleridge sprang to mind. 'Where, Alph, the sacred river, ran/Through caverns measureless to man/Down to a sunless sea.'"

The photographs bring to life his impressions of the local villages, "tiny clusters of flat-roofed houses built of mud and stone". "Occasionally, the valley opens out a little and one can then go down to the river to cross it, either in a precarious form of coracle made of yak hides or on a still more precarious rope-bridge."

He wrote ruefully of the expedition's privations. "I have seen hares, partridges and silver pheasants feeding quite tamely a few feet from the path; they are never molested, for no life is allowed to be taken... We took no guns of any sort with us on our journey, but I must confess that after many months on a monotonous diet, consisting mainly of yak meat and turnips, I dearly longed to shoot something for the pot." Angus Stewart, curator of the Olympia fair, spoke of the honesty of the photographs: "They give you an idea of a country you can't find today. The way of life has vanished."

TV adverts can switch brain to danger channel



Dr Thomas Stuttaford

MARMITE Gravy Cubes add piquancy to the Sunday joint. Unless the diner is taking some form of anti-depressant, they are not only harmless but valuable, as they contain vitamins. Not so the television advertisement for the cubes, nor those advertising Boots cosmetics, Golden Wonder hot snacks and a host of other products. All these campaigns have been blamed for inducing epileptic seizures in vulnerable viewers. One-and-a-half million people in Britain have been troubled at some time by easily induced seizures. At any one time, between 4,000 and 5,000 are having treatment to control fits. The effect of television is a therapy, ECT, which immediately induces a seizure in a patient who is suffering from a depressed mood but no physical problem, demonstrates that anyone can be made to have a fit. It is only a question of the level of stimulation that is needed to induce it. Patients who have epilepsy — whether it is symptomatic with an obvious underlying cause, or idiopathic, which implies that the doctors have been unable to pinpoint the reason — can have a fit brought on by a relatively trivial change in the environment. Lights flashing at a certain frequency can so disturb a highly sensitive brain that they trigger the excessive discharge from the cerebral neurons which leads to the aberrant electrical activity which causes a seizure. The Boots advertisement for its No 7 lipstick has images which flicker at ever-

increasing speeds, thereby ensuring that those whose brains are unusually vulnerable will be affected by whatever frequency is needed to bring about a fit. The report about the Marmite Gravy Cube advertisement is particularly interesting as the person involved thought that the moving black and white lines in it induced a seizure. A patient once claimed to be similarly affected by a Bridget Riley painting in which carefully spaced lines gave the illusion of flickering. TV adverts are not the only intermittent lights to induce seizures. Computer games were blamed, with good reason, three or four years ago. More dangerous is the effect of unisual light patterns on car drivers, such as an evening light shining through the uprights of a long bridge. Sydney Harbour Bridge was so frequently accused of causing accidents that it was altered. Similar troubles are met by holidaymakers confronted by the evening sun through poplars beside a French road. A more common experience arises from the moving lights of heavy oncoming traffic. Some commuters, already tired, and therefore vulnerable, after a hard day find that when the oncoming traffic is travelling at a certain speed, its lights can cause changes in the brainwave pattern, which are a potential hazard. It is estimated that about 5 per cent of people whose brains are over-sensitive to external stimuli and therefore suffer seizures may have one induced by flickering lights.

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Albanian leader orders riot police to allow protests

By Richard Owen

PRESIDENT BERISHA of Albania, who has aroused international concern by cracking down on protests over fraudulent "pyramid" savings schemes, appeared to change tack at the weekend. He admitted that his Government had made "mistakes" and ordered police to allow demonstrations in provinces "without hindrance".

Mr Berisha, addressing supporters in the ruling Democratic Party, said many of the deluded investors had only themselves to blame, but conceded that the Government had also been naive. "We have learnt a hard lesson in free-market economics," he said. "We are new to democracy

and capitalism." The President, criticised by some for reverting to authoritarian Balkan ways since his election in 1992 after the collapse of communism, said it had been an error to use force against protesters, and people "should be allowed to demonstrate freely".

Greek Army bars way to migrants

FROM JAMES PETTIFER IN KAPSTICA

HIGH up here in the mountains on the Greek-Albanian border, the Greek Army is starting the "Balkan Plan" to close the border to illegal immigrants, and block passage to the thousands of Albanians who are starting to move south towards Greece.

The "Balkan Plan" was leaked from the Greek Foreign Office this week, and is designed to seal the 7,500-mile border from Turkey to Albania, but the remote terrain and sheer numbers of people are likely to make it difficult. The Greek police have had roadblocks in operation for a long while, but they often function lethargically. The army will be a tougher nut to crack, and troops on road patrol are beginning to make their presence felt.

Many migrants are victims of Albania's collapsed pyramid schemes and feel they have little choice but to go south.

At the moment migrant numbers are in their thousands, not the tens of thousands everyone expects when the spring comes and the

remote mountain tracks become more usable. A key issue for Greek military will be its terms of operation. A Greek policeman, Miltades Andreopoulos, was arrested and charged with manslaughter here on Wednesday for shooting an Albanian migrant. In general, the police have tried to run a humane border regime. But now the army is involved the realities of numbers of people and landscape mean that, unless they have some threat of force to use, they are likely to be as ineffective as the police in stopping the flow of poor and desperate people into Greece.



Fleeing skinheads try to board a Berlin train after a "Work for Germans First" rally led to clashes between extreme rightwingers, leftwingers and police

Relaunched Northern League still lacks Italians' support

By Richard Owen

UMBERTO BOSSI, leader of the Northern League, tried to relaunch his secessionist movement at the weekend by adopting a softer, less aggressive image after last autumn's misjudged — and poorly received — "Declaration of Independence" in Venice.

But opinion polls suggested that Signor Bossi's revamped "consensual secessionism" still lacked broad support among Northern Italians. Known for his fiery rhetoric and unpredictable behaviour, he told the Northern League's annual congress, in Milan,

that a "referendum" on April 20 would decide whether Italians in the North wanted to form a breakaway state of "Padania". But government officials said that it would be only a League opinion poll. Signor Bossi said that national media polls were biased against the League. He was clearly stung by one in *Corriere della Sera*, published in Milan, which said that 80 per cent of those questioned believed Italy should remain "single and indivisible". Seventy-five per cent also thought Signor Bossi

Debris theory will not alter thrust of prosecution in Senna death trial

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

FRANK WILLIAMS and two other members of the Formula One Williams team go on trial in Bologna this week over the death of Ayrton Senna, the Brazilian racing champion. The hearing is beginning amid claims that Senna may have crashed because his car hit debris on the track rather than because a steering-column weld snapped, as the prosecution alleges.

But Italian legal sources said the prosecution would still focus on the steering-column theory because "all the reliable technical evidence points that way". Lawyers said Maurizio Passarini, the Bologna public prosecutor, had built his case in a "painstaking" two-year inquiry since the fatal crash at the Imola track during the San Marino Grand Prix in 1994.

All technical evidence so far pointed to "modifications" to the steering column as the cause of Senna's death, the lawyers said.

Senna's death provoked deep shock not only because millions witnessed the horrifying end of a brilliant and much admired sporting hero who was three times world champion, but because it placed the future of Formula One racing in Italy in doubt — leading drivers have said they will refuse to race in the country again if Mr Williams is convicted.

Suggestions that debris from an earlier crash was the cause of the accident would shift blame away from Mr Williams and other team members and towards members of the Imola track management, who are also facing trial. A report said pictures taken by Paul-Henri Cahier, a photographer who was 600 yards from the point where Senna left the track, showed what appeared to be a piece of Benetton bodywork lying in Senna's path and then flying into the air as he either hit it or swerved to avoid it. There had been an earlier collision between a Benetton car and a Lotus.

Team members say that he was unusually tense on the day of the race, partly because he was being challenged by Michael Schumacher (driving for Benetton), partly because of tensions with his family over his girlfriend, Adriane Galisteu, and partly because he was deeply upset by the death of the Austrian driver Roland Ratzenberger, whose car hit the track wall at 200mph during a qualifying race.



Senna: unusually tense on the day he was killed

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503 من لاجل

Peasants' revolt in Passau sows more seeds of euro doubt

Conventional wisdom holds that the big event in Germany last week was the astounding rise in unemployment. However much soul-searching those figures may have provoked, a mood change occurred in the Bavarian town of Passau which may have a still more profound bearing on the future.

Every Ash Wednesday, members of the regional ruling party, the Christian Social Union, gather in halls and tents to hear rousing speeches from their leaders while they sink colossal flagons of beer. Audiences have always been respectful and



deferral to the party chairman — until this year. Theo Waigel, the German Finance Minister and CSU leader, had to be slipped into the Nibelungen Hall in Passau by a side entrance. His

speech was punctuated by boos and whistles. Something is upsetting those plump and usually placid Bavarian farmers. That something is change.

The men of Passau expect their politicians to protect them from upheaval, but the truth is that they face a rolling economic revolution is slowly dawning. Last week's anger was generated by tax and pension reform dictated by the need for Germany to squeeze its deficit to qualify for the single currency. Looking further ahead, the farmers also see their subsidies falling under pressure from world trade rules and

because support will have to be spread thinner as countries such as Poland and Hungary join the EU.

The once-reassuring EU plans to replace the mark with the euro. Some Bavarians fear that the new money will be worth less. Others, like the men and women who make BMWs outside Munich, worry that the euro will be strong enough to hit car sales to non-euro countries like Italy. What few people in Germany or anywhere else have grasped is that the single currency will also start another wave of labour market deregulation and welfare state shrinkage. The single

currency plainly requires a matching "economic government" to work. Whether or not the single-currency states get together joint foreign policies (highly unlikely), harmonise tax rates (probable) or organise a carbon energy tax (improbable), one kind of "political union" will materialise instantly.

The success of failure of the euro, as Professor David Currie points out in an Economist Intelligence Unit paper released today, will depend on whether the EU tackles "reform of fiscal, welfare and labour market arrangements to re-

move undue rigidities in the European economies". That is a polite way of saying that present job security and welfare levels must fall to keep the euro flying, because no other remedy will be available.

Once the euro is launched, pressures to make the zone's markets work more efficiently will become acute. No European politician believes that wages can be reduced to keep ailing firms competitive — although a German metalworkers' leader broke with precedent last week and suggested just that. Citizens of the euro zone will not do as the American unemployed

do: move to where the jobs are. Workers in the EU have actually become less mobile in recent years.

French and Germans, in particular, show no inclination to look for work in a different region or country. Loathing of free-market economics is rising again in France. One gloomy tract against globalisation, *The Economic Horror*, has become a surprise bestseller.

Two quite different conclusions can be drawn. The first is heard as an argument for British entry to the single currency; that in joining a deregulating Rhineland

economy, deregulated Britain might do well and show others the way.

But that thought can be turned on its head. The process of squeezing back perks and protections in the continental economies may be a grief-stricken trauma of uncertain outcome, as societies are forced to dismantle welfare states and to depoliticise the control of money against a background of rising unemployment and surging votes for politicians of the Far Right. In that event, we should stand well back.

GEORGE BROCK

French elite steps up fight against immigration law

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

A PROTEST launched by French film-makers last week in defiance of stringent immigration laws has snowballed into a full-scale anti-government rebellion involving many prominent members of France's intellectual elite.

Sculptors, doctors, writers and painters are among those backing the call for a campaign of civil disobedience against a Bill further tightening tough 1993 immigration legislation. It requires citizens to report the arrival and departure of foreigners staying in their homes without residence papers.

More than 400 French actors, including actresses Catherine Deneuve and Jeanne Moreau, yesterday joined the growing ranks of the protesters, which already include 300 writers, 400 senior theatrical figures, 700 psychoanalysts and 1,200 journalists and lawyers. Today 50 cartoonists and artists will publish drawings in the left-wing *Libération* newspaper attacking immigration policies.

The revolt began last Wednesday when 59 film-makers, including only a handful of household names, published a statement demanding to be prosecuted. "We are guilty, every one of us, of putting up illegal foreign residents recently... we ask to be investigated and put on trial," the film directors wrote,



Deneuve, left, and Moreau: joining disobedience call

describing the laws as an incitement "to inform on others inspired by xenophobia".

Fuelled by concern over the recent municipal election victory by the extreme-right National Front in the southern town of Vitrolles, the protest has gathered momentum, attracting support both from expected quarters, such as Bernard-Henri Lévy, the omnipresent left-wing philosopher, film director and pundit, and less likely rebels, such as the 58 physics experts who signed an Internet petition.

The Government's defenders have been quick to characterise the campaign as grandstanding by the art establishment, pointing out that some of the most passionate protesters had voiced few if any objections to the tougher legis-

lation. The new Bill would formalise an existing decree requiring that individuals tell local authorities when an immigrant without residence papers has moved into or out of their homes.

The so-called Debré laws, named after Jean-Louis Debré, the Interior Minister, and due to be debated by parliament later this month, would also require finger-printing for non-EU people entering the country. The Government has called the laws "balanced" and has so far ruled out amending or dropping the most controversial clause.

Critics say the Government's headline stance is an attempt to lure votes from the National Front, which wants to expel millions of immigrants. The civil disobedience

campaign has evolved quickly into a wider row over immigration and the advance of the National Front, taking the Government by surprise.

Guy Sorman, a writer and adviser to Alain Juppé, the Prime Minister, said in a television interview on Friday that the laws requiring the reporting of illegal immigrants might have to be amended. He was immediately contradicted by government officials. A spokesman for the ruling Gaullist party said: "All local politicians know that residence permits are behind much of the illegal immigration afflicting France."

In an article for the *Journal du Dimanche* newspaper yesterday, M. Debré insisted that the protesters were "trying to stir up emotions by falsely raising the notion of informing on others", compared by critics to wartime legislation under the Vichy regime.

The objective is to aid the struggle against illegal immigration and to reinforce the means by which we can tackle the real underground network of illegal immigration that exists in France," M. Juppé said. Vitrolles: Several hundred left-wing demonstrators massed at the town hall here yesterday when the National Front officially took control and elected Catherine Mègret, wife of the party's number two, as Mayor. (Reuters)



Albright optimistic on future of Russia

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

THE US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, said yesterday that America was not concerned about the future of Russia despite President Yeltsin's state of health because there were other Kremlin leaders dedicated to democracy and the free market.

Ms Albright arrived in Rome yesterday at the start of an 11-nation tour as part of consultations in the run-up to the Nato summit in Madrid in June, which is to confront the vexed issue of Nato's eastward expansion. Liberal Russian leaders such as Andrei Kozyrev, the former Foreign Minister, have said that absorption of former Communist countries, such as Poland and Hungary, against the wishes of Russia would strengthen "nationalistic and militaristic forces" in the Kremlin.

Ms Albright, dubbing her tour of European capitals the "Albright Express", briskly dismissed such arguments in talks with Romano Prodi, the Italian Prime Minister, and Lamberto Dini, the Foreign Minister. She will visit Bonn, Paris, Brussels and London before arriving in Moscow on Thursday.

The Secretary of State said it was "very important for both the Europeans and the Russians to understand that we are into a new era. It is no longer an adversarial relationship with Russia." She said that President Yeltsin, who is to meet President Clinton in Helsinki next month, had played an important role in reforming Russia. But Mr Clinton and his senior officials were in close touch with other leaders who shared reformist values.

Ms Albright arrives at the Rome Defence Ministry yesterday at the start of a tour of European capitals, part of consultations on Nato's proposed expansion

New strategist, page 18
Leading article, page 19

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Car theft rivals drugs in world crime earnings

BY OLIVER ANGLIST

ORGANISED car theft is now as big an international problem as drug smuggling, according to a survey by a London-based group.

Russian crime syndicates have developed networks to transport vehicles from Europe to the former Soviet Union. About 25 per cent of foreign-made cars on the streets of Moscow are believed to be stolen.

Bettina Wassener, European analyst at the Control Risks Group, said: "Car theft is an international plague that costs billions of pounds every year. If car theft was a legitimate business, it would rank fifth worldwide among the Fortune 500 companies."

Moscow criminals can earn up to £1 million on a single luxury car. They sell them below market value, wait a few days and steal them back from the buyers who, knowing from the price they bought a stolen car, will not report the theft to police. Gangs can repeat this trick up to 30 times on a single car.

Ms Wassener said: "Vehicle theft is one of the easiest ways of making money... while prostitutes and casino operators need a property to ply their trade, the thieves just stroll the streets and steal."

The crime syndicates are split between Russians and Chechens, Moscow's arch-enemies in the Caucasus. The gangs are said to have expanded from their traditional activities such as drug-running into car-dealing by combining the two. They use the stolen cars to ferry drugs across Europe and then sell the cars

afterwards, effectively profiting twice.

According to the survey, the number of stolen vehicles has quadrupled in parts of Europe since the collapse of communism. In Poland, where car theft rose by 20 per cent in 1995, a top presidential aide and the Interior Minister's wife had their cars stolen.

Ms Wassener said: "In large East European and former Soviet cities, there is a great demand for foreign-made cars, which are seen as status symbols. This is the incentive."

Tokyo: A spate of car thefts in the Japanese capital since the new year has led to the setting up of the nation's first car crime unit (Robert Whyman writes). Japan's cities have the lowest crime rate of leading industrialised nations and remarkably few vehicle thefts. Police called the thefts "unprecedented".

But it is the well-organised networks of criminal gangs across the continent which provide the means. Some criminal gangs started off stealing cars before extending their activities to other forms of crime.

Peter Koehler, a German crime expert, believes that many car owners are being persuaded by criminals to sell their cars to them, then report them as stolen to collect the insurance. "We estimate that in up to 50 per cent of all cases, the owner of the vehicle is involved."

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Life in the shadows? One in three people, the authors say, exhibit traits that are debilitating enough to disrupt the smooth running of their lives

Do you need to see a psychiatrist?

Anjana Ahuja on the doctors who believe that the eternal bachelor, the overprotective mother and the temper-prone husband are all mentally ill

The loner, the obsessive, the eternal bachelor, the overprotective mother, the temper-prone husband. We may titillate at their social shortcomings, but we accept them because they collectively illustrate the marvellous diversity of human nature.

But we are wrong — these characters are mentally ill. Small hiccups in the biology of their brains have left them normal except for one flaw — be it the inability to hold down a job or relationship, or the failure to respond to social cues and body language.

This is the astonishing theory contained in *Shadow Syndromes*, a book by Dr John Ratey, a psychiatrist, and Dr Catherine Johnson, a writer who first became interested in the subject when she discovered her son was mildly autistic. The book may occasionally veer into syrupy American psychobabble but it has struck a chord among American psychiatrists.

One in three people, the

authors say, exhibit unusual traits that are too mild to rank as clinical mental disorders but are debilitating enough to disrupt the smooth running of their lives. These are "shadow syndromes" of more serious disorders, nudging a person into the vast no-man's-land between perfect mental health and clinical psychiatric illness. Mental health experts have long believed that people are falling between the cracks, and have even nicknamed them the "worried well" — too disturbed to sail through life's challenges but too well to warrant medical treatment.

Dr Ratey, executive director of research at Medfield State Hospital in Massachusetts, and assistant professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, points out that most people who seek therapy,

for example, do not have clear-cut, psychiatric problems. Instead they might complain of a mish-mash of problems, such as sleeping difficulties, low libido, or of feeling angry all the time.

The book documents six categories of behaviour which exist in shadow form, and the authors invent a personality type to illustrate the mild version. These are autism (the brilliant computer whiz-kid with no social skills); hypomania (the charismatic politician whose thrill-seeking sexual behaviour threatens his downfall); obsessive-compulsive disorder (a secretary who endlessly scrutinises the meaning of a passing remark, to the exclusion of all else); intermittent rage disorder (a sportsman who flies off the handle at seemingly trivial incidents); depression (a friend who always manages to put a dampener on any jolly social occasion); and attention deficit disorder (an energetic, impatient executive who leaves a trail of unfinished sentences, projects and even marriages, in her wake).

We can all think of someone who fits one of these descriptions. Conventional wisdom, and fashionable psychoanalysis, would ascribe these traits to the patient's background — perhaps a distant mother, problems at school or an overbearing sibling.

Dr Ratey thinks otherwise. He is a firm believer in the biology of personality. These patterns of behaviour, he says, originate in the structure and chemistry of the brain. He doesn't dismiss environment completely, but says that our funny little quirks are a blend of biology and environment. "You have to take the basic stuff you're born with, and then deal with the reality around that. You have to learn how to handle your biology."

But what if these people are happy with the way they are?

"That's fine," says Dr Ratey. "But let's take an example of someone who keeps getting fired because he flies into rages. He needs to do something about it because his biology is ruining his life, and perhaps his marriage."

Isn't the emotive phrase "shadow syndrome", which conjures up visions of being haunted or stalked by mental problems, just another example of the bad to put labels to conditions? "It's replacing labels," Dr Ratey says.

"Someone might be thought of as morose, weird or arrogant, but if you replace those terms with the phrase shadow syndrome, it changes the way people relate to them. People don't blame them for their condition, and no longer ostracise them."

He adds that sufferers themselves are usually relieved to find their condition has a name. Knowing its origins allows them to get a grip on the problem, and stop blaming themselves for being social, professional or academic failures.

Neither does he think that people would feel stigmatised by being called mentally unwell: "It's a choice between facing up to a mild depression, and having no friends," he says bluntly.

As well as choosing a catchy name for these conditions, Dr Johnson and Dr Ratey have timed their book perfectly. It catches the wave of interest in neuroscience, which is unravelling the workings of the human brain at a breathtaking pace. Conditions such as obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and addiction seem to be associated with specific areas in the brain. In about a third of OCD cases, removing part of the brain in a modern-day lobotomy can cure a sufferer, graphic proof of the biology of personality.

Dr Ratey is prepared for some flak when he starts promoting the book in earnest later this year. "Some of the stuff on OCD and addiction

might worry people, but colleagues and peers have been very receptive. They see these shadow syndromes in themselves, and they know the difficulty of drawing the line between what is normal and what is pathological.

"Our ideas are by no means the last word, and new ideas will eventually replace ours. We are just highlighting a different way of thinking about personality."

Shadow Syndromes, John J. Ratey MD and Catherine Johnson PhD, Bantam Press, July 10.

The book documents six categories of behaviour

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Beyond the Sun □ Dirty story □ Butterfly attack

Great pioneer

NEARLY seven billion miles from Earth and 25 years after it was launched, a veteran spacecraft is still churning out scientific data. Pioneer 10 long since left behind the most distant of the planets, slipping off into interstellar space.

Back on Earth, the US space agency, NASA, plans to celebrate the spacecraft's silver jubilee by refusing to spend any more money on it. Solar activity is at present increasing, so abandoning Pioneer 10 now seems shortsighted.

This is bad news for another space pioneer. Professor James Van Allen of the University of Iowa. In 1958 he made the first-ever discovery by a scientific spacecraft, identifying the Van Allen belts — regions above the Earth where charged particles are trapped by the Earth's magnetic field. Now over 80, he has an experiment on Pioneer 10 which is still producing interesting results.

Pioneer 10 was launched on March 2, 1972, and was the first spacecraft to visit Jupiter, in December 1973. It passed beyond the orbit of the outermost planet in June 1983, becoming the first man-made object to leave the solar system. Today it is more than 66 astronomical units from Earth (one AU is the distance between Earth and Sun), and radio signals take more than 18 hours to go to and fro, at a speed of 186,000 miles per second.

Last month, in a remarkable manoeuvre,



SCIENCE BRIEFING

Nigel Hawkes

Pioneer 10 was moved so that its radio aerial pointed back towards the Earth. It had drifted off line so that the signal, already the faintest fraction of a microwatt, was weaker still. To produce enough power from its failing generator, the spacecraft transmitter had to be turned off during the manoeuvre, and then turned on again. To the joy of the controllers, it worked.

"This is almost miraculous," says Dr Larry Lasher, project manager for Pioneer at NASA's Ames research centre in California. "We worried that turning off the transmitter in the deep cold of space for 90 minutes, then turning it on again, would cause a thermal shock that would damage it. But it came back on perfectly."

Professor Van Allen's experiment, the only one on Pioneer 10 still being provided with power, measures the intensity of cosmic radiation. As the spacecraft gets further and further from the Sun, there will eventually come a point when radiation from outside will exceed that from the Sun, marking the true boundary of the solar system — the heliopause. When Pioneer 10 was launched, this was thought to be no further out than the orbit of Jupiter — a very large underestimate, as Professor Van Allen remarks. "Now we think the heliopause is about 120 astronomical units away — still way beyond where Pioneer 10 has reached."

Mud that cleared up a potted history



HERE'S a new excuse for not doing the washing up. Archaeologists at Southampton University have solved the mystery of an Etruscan pot by studying the dirt on its surface. They believe the

technique may be of more general use in archaeology.

The pot, a *kantharos*, or drinking-cup was found in a university strongroom in 1993, with no records of its provenance. Attached was a handwritten label reading: "Etruscan *kantharos*? Romano-British? Dug up near New Hall, Cheshire. Bought by VSP out of a Brokers shop some years ago, 1911."

VSP was thought to refer to Vivian de Sola Pinto, who took up the chair of English at Southampton in 1926. To test the pot's authenticity, archaeologists examined a fragment of its clay, and found it matched clays from southern Etruria.

They then studied soil found in crevices on the cup. They found they could match the fresh crystals of green augite on the cup with Italian black sand. That means the label was wrong, and the cup had been dug up in Italy. "Normally when artefacts are dug up, they are washed," Dr David Williams, one of the team involved says. "Sometimes it doesn't pay to clean off all the dirt."

Flying danger to Spanish geraniums



A BUTTERFLY from South Africa is spreading panic through the window-boxes of Spain. Its caterpillars are destroying the geraniums which are found on balconies, windowsills and terraces throughout the country, and which are normally so hardy that even the most incompetent gardener can grow them.

The butterfly, *Cacyreus marshalli*, was first spotted in Mallorca in 1989, and by last summer was the most common on the island. It spread to the mainland and, lacking the predators that control it in South Africa, started to do serious damage. The larvae bore into flowers and leaves, developing into short, green caterpillars with white hairs and three red stripes. These drill galleries into the stalks, interrupting the flow of sap and killing the plants.

The butterflies have reached the Pyrenees and are expected to cross into France this spring. The economic effects in Spain are considerable, since geraniums account for 13 per cent of total garden centre turnover. But British gardeners should not panic yet: two *Cacyreus* caterpillars were found in Cheshunt as long ago as 1978, but never spread. With luck, it may be too cold here for the butterfly to flourish.

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But is it art?

Earlier this month an exhibition celebrating three decades of erotic photographs from the Pirelli calendar opened at the Palazzo Grassi in Venice. In a country where images of near-naked women adorn every billboard and game show girls can resemble soft porn stars (indeed many are porn stars), the appropriateness of staging such an exhibition at a venue dedicated to fine and applied arts was not questioned. The main preoccupation of the Italian media was gossiping about who attended the launch party.

But as the Times critic John Russell Taylor noted in his review of the opening, the Pirelli pictures raise complex aesthetic questions: what is art? And is value intrinsic to, or conferred on, a work? What activities does the word "culture" actually describe? And is a photograph of a naked supermodel with a sand-dusted bottom to be judged by the same criteria as, say, a Matisse?

At a meeting next week in London, executives from Pirelli, the Italian tyre and cable group, will seek to persuade the Victoria and Albert Museum that its calendar is indeed a work of art and deserves a major exhibition. It is an audacious move: a bit like asking the Uffizi to provide gallery space for a tribute to the art of Hugh Hefner's Playboy. Or perhaps Pirelli are simply exploiting the crazy relativism of an age that lauds Damien Hirst's sheep suspended in a tank of formaldehyde and Gilbert and George's experiments with urine and excreta as high art.

Once viewed as little more than a sleazy promotional gimmick, *The Calendar*, as it is known at Pirelli, now offers a showcase for the world's A-list photographers and models. Richard Avedon, Herb Ritts, Norman Parkinson and Allen Jones have all worked on it. Bruce Weber, whose stylised, overlit images are the engine driving Calvin Klein's global advertising campaign, has been commissioned to produce the 1998 edition — the first to feature men alongside the obligatory semi-naked supermodels. It will cost something like £1.5 million to produce. Small change for a group with a turnover of £5 billion.

But according to its critics the Pirelli photographs have no place at the V&A or any other dignified institution. "The calendars are a pretentious load of old

Should the Victoria and Albert Museum stage an exhibition of Pirelli nudes? Jason Cowley reports

rubbish," the photographer Brian Duffy famously said after working on several calendars. "The pomposity of the Pirelli people is amazing." The art critic Philip Hensher agrees. "The Pirelli photographs are not art. They have no place at the V&A or any other serious museum. Institutions such as these should have nothing to do with Pirelli."

"I know Pirelli argues that artists have painted nudes all through history and that there is nothing wrong with photographs of nudes, especially if they are tastefully done by famous photographers. But the Pirelli pictures are terrible, precisely because they are tastefully done. One of the great things about nudes in the history of art is that they have been the most unbelievable fidd, not stylised titillation."

There is a place for this kind of exhibition at, say, a museum of popular culture. You can't blame Pirelli for trying: it's their business to promote their image. But their calendar isn't art: it's conventional silliness. Ursula Owen, co-founder of Virago and now chief executive of Index on Censorship, is troubled by the pictures, but for different reasons. She thinks they may be exploitative of women, though she supports Pirelli's right to stage an exhibition.

As with Page Three, the Pirelli pictures are tacky and may cause distress to women, but censorship is not the answer. We do live in a misogynistic society, but opposing the Pirelli photographs being shown at the V&A would solve nothing."

Colin Ford, founding director of the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television in Bradford, said the Pirelli photographs posed problems for any serious curator. "I can understand why there is resistance to the exhibition. There is a line of argument saying that these photographs are sleazy and exploitative and shouldn't be given exhibition space. Indeed, there is the politically correct line which says that any picture of

a naked woman is bad. "And yet some of the best photographers in the world have worked for Pirelli. Richard Avedon is a brilliant photographer by anyone's standard. If I had to make a decision on whether to give the go-ahead to an exhibition of this kind at the V&A, I would be more supportive than for, say, an exhibition of Robert Mapplethorpe's work, which is difficult, unpleasant and exploitative in a way that Pirelli isn't."

"Of course, the photographers are working within a genre but, at the same time, they are subverting that genre by producing work that is subtle, witty and complex. They are great photographers, not porn merchants, and their photographs challenge expectations as all good art should."

When the Pirelli calendar was established in 1964, few grand artistic claims were made for it. As the cult around it grew, so the photographs became more lavish and explicit. The 1973 edition, a collaboration between Allen Jones and Brian Duffy, flirted with fetishism and sado-masochism. One photograph, which depicts ice-cream melting on to a woman's breasts, was banned by the then Pirelli group chairman Leopoldo Pirelli.

A year later, Pirelli announced that it would commission no more calendars — because, says communications manager Julie Naylor, "we thought we were becoming better known for our calendars than for our tyres."

It was eventually relaunched in 1984, the old vulgarity replaced by a more stylised eroticism. But it struggled to recapture the old lustre until, in 1994, Herb Ritts was hired to photograph Cindy Crawford, Helena Christensen and Kate Moss sprawling on white sand on Honeymoon Island in the Bahamas. The photographs were a sensation; the calendar reasserted itself as the ultimate corporate marketing device and the trend for using celebrity photographers and models was

established. The calendar was reborn.

Ms Naylor will spearhead discussions with the V&A. Unswayed by criticism, she is confident that the museum will respond to Pirelli's initiative. Pirelli has held parties at the V&A, and sponsored the transformation of the central quadrangle into a model of a 16th century Renaissance garden in 1987.

"The exhibition is going on tour to Milan and New York; we hope to bring it to the Victoria & Albert Museum early next year. If that doesn't work out we shall target the Tate. I was at the opening in Venice and it was exceptionally well received. There was nothing there that was really raunchy, nothing to cause offence. We have close links with the V&A and believe it is the perfect venue for the exhibition."

Ms Naylor dismisses any suggestion that the photographs are vulgar or exploitative. "The photographs have become more and more beautiful over the years and appeal as much to women as men. In fact, of the requests I get for people wanting to buy a calendar, 98 per cent come from women."

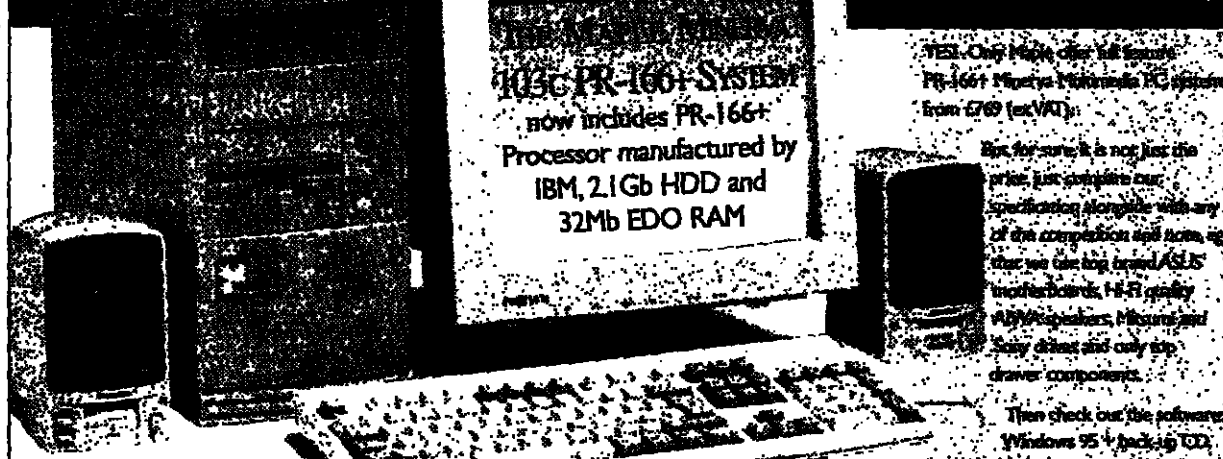
Whether Pirelli will succeed remains a grey area. While reluctant to discuss the forthcoming meeting, the V&A's spokeswoman, Tracey Williamson, says, "It's true that we have close links with Pirelli, but I'm not sure if its exhibition is something that we would give space to." There was a similar message from the Tate Gallery: "The Tate has no plans for any such exhibition because our schedule is full for the next two years."

There was some encouragement, however, from Sir Roy Strong. As a former director of the V&A for 12 years, he worked closely with Pirelli on the Italian garden. "They were very generous sponsors," he recalls. "One ought not to be snooty about them; you should judge photographs on their own merit and Pirelli use some very good photographers. I have no problem with titillation: a lot of pictures in the past have been produced to titillate and they are on the walls of the National Gallery. Anyway, the goalposts keep moving as to what is art and what is soft porn and what is decent and what isn't. The museum has to be inclusive."



Naomi Campbell photographed by Richard Avedon for the 1995 Pirelli calendar. Does it compare with a Matisse?

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CHANGING TIMES

ARTS THE WEEK AHEAD



THEATRE

David Hare's adaptation of Chekhov's *Ivanov* opens at the Almeida Theatre
FIRST NIGHT: Wednesday
REVIEW: Friday



BOOKS

Behind the facade: the letters of Edith Sitwell are published
IN THE SHOPS: Now
REVIEW: Thursday



VISUAL ART

The Tate mounts the first major British exhibition of painting by Louis Corbin
OPENS: Thursday
REVIEW: Tomorrow



MUSIC

The Barbican goes Gallic, as Michael Tilson Thomas opens the LSO's Debussy series
CONCERT: Thursday
REVIEW: Monday

I bought a yoke the other day. It could have been lifted out of one of Thomas Hardy's novels. Beautifully bowed and balanced, it has stayed unchanged since before the writing of *Genesis* and was still commonplace in our rural counties no more than half a dozen generations ago.

This one is leathery about the length which straddles the neck, and a chain is manacled to each end, and so although it could have been for a human drudge, a hauler of pails of water or buckets of animal feed.

Polished now, and pegged onto the wall of the shop like a painting or a mirror it has become in our century an ornament. The long link with oxen — still yoked together in certain parts of the world — has vanished from this country and the odds are that even on *University Challenge* many young contestants might puzzle over it. It is a magnificently simple piece of work, like so many of the wooden implements used for

His yoke is easy and it hangs on my wall

farming. It is poignant that implements often used for the most arduous and repetitive work should now seem as attractive as, say, a piece of sculpture; more attractive than some modern pieces.

Just as those who built the monumental works of stone in Egypt were doing it not for art but for religion and power and only later was art discovered in them, so, I believe, on a more mundane level, the diurnal artefacts of common life, freed by time from their original purpose, float into another sphere and bear comparison with much that can be found in contemporary galleries. In fact, I can see an argument mounted that would have a yoke outlast most of the new sculptures — but that is another discussion.

There is not a single old agricultural implement which I possess

which does not look finely made, whether it is a pig bristle scraper or a scythe or a wooden bowl. Not that I have much of a collection, just a few bits picked up along the way when historical curiosity has been prodded by an unusually pleasing object. They are still remarkably cheap. Even my yoke, which, if given the artistically correct chic contemporary title could fetch a four or a five-figure sum, is comfortably within two digits.

This is not to decry contemporary art. It is, though, to point out that art seems to make up its own mind where it chooses to take up occupation and can as soon appear in a vulgar folk song as in an intricate symphony, in a well-rubbed ballad as in a well-wrought poem, in a traditional dance as in a balletic spectacular, in the plough share as in a torment

MELVYN BRAGG



of cultivated stone. It is fashionable to blame people for not buying enough contemporary art, and there is nothing to match the particular thrill of feeling at one with your own time by recognis-

ing, as you think, something lasting.

But there is also the matter of resonance. This can degenerate into the collecting by numbers which furnishes so many walls — although if this is what you want, who am I to point the finger? The commonplace implements I'm speaking of are outside accepted drawing room art: they were not made for decoration, but for use, and although their decorative value is now extremely high, in my opinion, there are many who cannot throw away their association with toil and do not want to get their hands dirty. I could make the same claims for the great relics of the Industrial Revolution: steam engines, massive machines of all kinds, altars of skill and imagination.

It is also remarkable how few of the most common objects remain.

This is not too hard to understand. They were abandoned once their purpose was made obsolete. Perhaps up and down the country there are tens of thousands of yokes such as mine, but I rather doubt it.

The yoke is not just a yoke, of course, but like any other ancient artefact it has been the breeding ground for metaphor. Couples have been yoked together — "We have been joined together with the yoke of holy matrimony". The yoke has bowed down the neck in servitude — "The yoke of bondage". The word is used most poignantly by Milton on his blindness: "Who best bears his mild yoke, they serve Him best".

How long will the energy of the metaphors for yoke continue to inform our language in any vital sense? Many of our agricultural

metaphors are like false teeth: in the right place, looking good, but fatally out of contact with the rest of the apparatus.

In our increasingly urban society how much does "ploughing a straight furrow" really mean? There are hundreds of others. Sometimes I think that the huge variety of country imagery will subside in our literature and become rather like dialects are today — regarded as merely quaint and opaque to most readers.

About 10,000 years ago a major revolution took place when we swung from the hunter-scavenger path to that of the agriculturalist. We at this moment may be experiencing just as radical a change as human kind swings yet again, this time from agriculture to the city. Perhaps we're on a different track to a different destination needing different skills and different imagery.

My yoke will be like a relic from a past time, a baton which I can hand on as evidence that this was once the way we lived.

OPERA IN CARDIFF AND BIRMINGHAM

New look at an old friend

February is *Carmen* month: ten days ago a popular version at the Albert Hall, last Saturday a new Welsh National Opera production, while another new staging is playing at the Bastille Opéra — report next week. This WNO *Carmen*, given in French with the original spoken dialogue, is strikingly fresh. Every note, every word, has been weighed and considered anew. There is no hint of tradition or routine. You may not agree with everything that happens, but you have to admire the painstaking preparation, the questing intelligence behind it all.

The conductor Robert Spano takes full advantage of the size of a theatre for which the piece was composed to give a sparkling account of the score. Woodwind is always to the fore, textures are ideally crisp, phrases are really phrased (sometimes over-phrased), staccato markings faithfully observed. The colourful detail of Bizet's instrumentation is lovingly realised — the harpist has an especially good evening. The sound is bright, buoyant, invigorating. Some of Spano's tempos are perhaps too deliberate, he has a penchant for glacial rindardos, and his reading is light on humour, but simply as sound it is irresistible.

It is hard to describe the production by Patrice Chaurier and Moshe Leiser without making it sound off-puttingly austere. Christian Fouchier's permanent set consists of a brightly coloured Howard Hodgkin-style front cloth, an abstract Turner-ish back wall, the odd chair and table, and that's it. Mood is controlled by

Christophe Forey's sparing use of light. There are no extras, no dancers, and they are missed only at Lillas Pastia's, which is too dull a dive for licentious soldiery to visit. We, the audience, are the passers-by in the first act and the processions in the last, with the WNO Chorus at their lushest singing *Les voicis* right down at the floats.

Carmen New Theatre, Cardiff

There is little, then, to distract from concentration on the music and the drama. The directors are not afraid of stillness, indeed they insist on it, on people just standing and singing. The chorus groupings are wonderfully eloquent. The children (excellent) don't just do a number, they take part in the show. The drama is played out quite unsparringly: you may think you know *Carmen* but you will still be on the edge of your seat at the raw human tragedy played out before you. The murder is pitilessly gruesome. All of which said, the production, like the conducting, is a little light on humour.

Most interesting of all is the characterisation of Carmen herself, roundly sung by Sara Fulgoni. She treats the Habanera as an interior monologue: the listeners are almost incidental. She is more vulnerable than provocative — indeed, there is a touch of Verdi's Violetta to her. Life has treated her rough, she's thinking of settling down, and similarly chooses the wrong man. The sheer joy on Fulgoni's face as she runs to José on his release from jail speaks of a woman deeply in love, and her disillusion and resentment at his lack of guts are understandable. This is a highly original interpretation.

John Daszak's honestly sung José is more conventional but no less harrowing for that. Bruno Caproni makes a dour rather than dashing Toreador, and sings his song powerfully. Alwyn Mellor is the vocally radiant, positive and heroic Micaela. A thoughtful, original production, then, and one to remind you that as well as being one of the most popular of all operas, *Carmen* in its indefinable multifacetedness is also one of the greatest.

RODNEY MILNES



Sara Fulgoni delivers a "highly original interpretation" in the title role of Welsh National Opera's unconventional new production of *Carmen*

Doubling gets the cauldron bubbling

PREMIERED exactly 150 years ago, *Macbeth* is an "early" Verdi opera sometimes thought to have a few problematic passages — the witches and murderers' music, for instance. But it can also be seen as Verdi's first great work. Perhaps these

judgments depend on the quality of the latest production one has seen, for the new City of Birmingham Touring Opera production puts it unmistakably in the "great" category.

The show, which should not be missed as it tours from Hexham to Newport on the Isle of Wight until April 12, does full justice to the work while nevertheless scaling it down. This company is, of course, in a class above most of the country's other travelling operatic outfits, and what really distinguishes the production is the Mayfair Suite in Birmingham's Bullring Centre was the smoothly rehearsed way in which singing, playing and staging were all channelled into an evening of gripping musical theatre.

Much of the drama is supplied by the orchestra, thanks to Julian Phillips' ingenious one-to-a-part arrangement (the harpist is pressed into second percus-

Macbeth Birmingham

sion service), which preserves the score's dark, mysterious *tintu*. It is tightly played by the CBO band under Richard Farnes, who conducts with flexibility and stylish brio.

In its first version, not Verdi's grander reworking for Paris, *Macbeth* was written for the small Florentine Teatro della Pergola, and Matthew Richardson's production shows just what intimate, immediate drama it can be. This *Macbeth* is played out in Gideon Davey's camera-lens box set, always sharply focused. Claustrophobic castle walls are evoked in the indoor scenes, and everywhere else the box provides a strong visual frame for the few geometric props, lit with striking simplicity by Robert A. Jones. With some neat cuts,

the opera moves with compelling power.

Nine singers cover all the parts, minor characters and chorus included. In the title role Mark Holland presented a big, robust baritone, more varied vocal colour and some softer dynamics might put *Macbeth* to match his vivid physical portrayal of the haunted, deranged ruler.

Helen Walker makes a strong, steady Lady Macbeth, with a bright, firm tone that thins out only at the very top. She sings words, in Andrew Porter's eloquent translation, with communicative clarity, something unfortunately lacking in David Marshall's sonorous Banquo. Stephen Rooke is a good Macduff, and the trio of athletic witches, Margaret Freece, Teresa Shaw and Lynne McAdam, make much of their supposedly problematic music.

JOHN ALLISON

Classy, but nasty

around the royal ankles. Alfonso's English Queen, a sulky Charlotte Christie, smells a rat and the play spirals into a tug-of-war with the king's soul.

Performed on a huge round table by a cast of 17, Colin Ellwood's production is a triumph of clarity over treacherous melodrama and rumbling thunderstorms. Ben Hayward, who cannot be much more than 11, plays young Alfonso with terrific gumption. Simon Chadwick turns the older version into a compelling psychodrama.

My only complaint is that Ellwood treats too carefully around Michael Jacobs's superb translation. The actors over-egg their purple moments, and whole scenes could

be lost, with minimal damage; particularly chunks where gossiping noblemen exchange entire chapters before they get to the point.

What Ellwood does get right is a balance between Vega's carnivorous passions and Jacobs's dry humour. "Why me?" shrieks Rachel's innocent sister as she is put to the sword. "It makes it more dramatic," says David Birrell's nobleman with irrefutable logic and despicable pleasure.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER



The Homecoming by Harold Pinter

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Sunday Times

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■ BLUES

Steve Earle — six times married, once imprisoned — pours out his heart at the Mean Fiddler
GIG: Saturday
REVIEW: Monday

13

A British feast for the eyes: Ralph Fiennes stars as the Sahara explorer Count Almásy in Anthony Minghella's film *The English Patient*, one of the strongest entries in this year's Berlin Film Festival

sporting as a flag-bearer for the new regional British cinema.

Beyond the English-language fare, not much has been stirring so far in the competition section, though *Port Djema*, a promising first stab at direction by the French producer Eric Heumann, offers much solid atmosphere, trapped around a hesitant star. We are in East Africa, a former French colony torn apart by rival ethnic factions. A Paris doctor, rather solemnly picked up by Jean-Yves Dubois, arrives to pick up the traces of a friend, recently murdered. A French Embassy fellow terms his activities "existential tourism". The phrase also characterises the whole film, but at least the postcards Heumann sends home are nicely photographed.

Another producer-director, Gerardo Herrero, shows his mettle in *Comanche Territory*, which pitches a Spanish TV anchorwoman into the war in Sarajevo. Sudden gun-fire and the surreal landscape of destruction offset the same old story about the ethics of war reporting. At one point the reporters are compared to a travelling circus, never at home, always at some hotspot or other, filing copy until death from land mines or sniper fire intervenes. This could almost describe film critics on the festival circuit, except that critics do die, albeit occasionally of boredom.

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America finds a new strategist

Bronwen Maddox on Madeleine Albright's European tour

Madeleine Albright, the first American Secretary of State since Henry Kissinger in the mid 1970s to have a European tour, arrives in London tomorrow on her inaugural tour of nine world capitals in 11 days. That flamboyant demonstration of stamina is intended to be the start of a sustained bid to set American foreign policy on a clearer, more successful course than it has followed for years.

The buzz that has accompanied her appointment is such that *Newsweek* magazine pronounced Washington to be "Mad about Madeleine". The recent revelation that her parents, Czech refugees, were Jewish — a fact she says she did not know herself — has added to her mystique. She is not shy of invoking the symbolism of her rise to eminence: "I think I really am the embodiment of the turbulence of the 20th century, as well as of the tolerance and optimism of the United States."

But she has also been criticised for lacking Dr Kissinger's encompassing vision of what foreign policy should be. Beyond her undeniable gift for tough talk and fluent soundbites, the question is whether she can bring coherence to a foreign policy that has for years been notably erratic.

Not since Dr Kissinger's day has America had a Secretary of State who plausibly claimed to have an all-encompassing strategy. According to his doctrine of *Realpolitik*, foreign policy should be dictated by a cool assessment of America's interests, rather than by the pursuit of ideological principles, "special" friendships or an emotional response to foreign tragedies.

Administrations have since then regularly departed from that philosophy. Ronald Reagan gave his foreign policy a strong ideological overlay; Dr Kissinger has since called this a naïve and mistaken approach, but concedes that it was successful. The end of the Cold War, which was widely interpreted in the United States as a triumph for American values, has been taken by many in Washington as justification for developing a more explicitly ideological foreign policy.

However, one of the main charges against President Clinton is that his foreign policy in his first term lacked any consistent motivation. On one side, disciples of *Realpolitik* argue that much of his policy has had no obvious connection with American interests: some caustically suggest that the interventions in Haiti, Somalia and Zaire, for instance, were inspired mainly by the images on CNN.

But from the other side, Mr Clinton is criticised by traditional Democratic liberals. They argue that America might do more good as the world's social worker than as its firefighter in small, bitter wars, and that Mr Clinton should battle harder with Congress to preserve the foreign aid budget. Mr Clinton has received grudging praise from leading Democrats and Republicans for giving America a central role in some of the

world's most intractable diplomatic negotiations, such as those over the Middle East, Bosnia and Northern Ireland. But critics argue that these frustrating talks, where America's success as broker depends entirely on the warring parties' interest in peace, have been allowed to dominate the State Department's agenda, at the cost of more serious issues. Above all, critics argue, Mr Clinton has muddled or worsened America's most important foreign relationships. In the case of Europe, he paid too little attention to the potential damage caused by the Helms-Burton Act penalising those who trade with Cuba. Towards China, the Administration has wavered, originally adopting a tough stance on human rights, but more recently giving way to mercantilist rhetoric, elevating trade policy to the heart of foreign policy.

Bringing clarity to this confusion is a tall order. But judging from her current trip, there are excellent reasons to think that Madeleine Albright will rise to the challenge. The most encouraging sign is her shrewdness in picking the enlargement of Nato as her main theme of all of her

There are excellent reasons to think that she will rise to the challenge

meetings in Europe and Russia. The planned enlargement of Europe's security umbrella to cover Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic is of obvious personal interest to her. But it is also appears particularly fruitful ground. For a start, America's role in the enlargement negotiations is essential and clear. Even more important, the tenor of the talks will define America's relations with Russia and, to a lesser extent, with Europe.

The talks will not be straightforward, however. The meeting in Paris will be dominated by the unresolved question of whether Nato's southern forces will be commanded by an American, or, as France wants, by a European. But already Madeleine Albright is clarifying the Administration's position. In particular, she has made it clear that she is sceptical about Russian claims that enlargement would fuel dangerous turmoil. In a signed article in this week's *Economist*, she writes: "It is a mistake to think that the fate of Russian democracy is somehow at stake in the enlargement debate. It would not be in our interest to delay or derail enlargement in response to the claims of some Russians that this constitutes an offensive act."

She is also using the trip as a canny sales pitch to the American public, to persuade them of the continued need for a US presence in Europe: "I feel that the United States must affirm its anchoring on the Old Continent." Foreign policy was always more complicated than Dr Kissinger made it seem; the end of the Cold War has compounded its intricacy for the United States. But there is every reason to hope that even if Madeleine Albright doesn't find a label as durable as *Realpolitik* for her strategy, she will have brought some of the clarity and consistency that have been so lacking.

Even the Home Office ought to see the difference between stealing a Titian and a pint of milk

The Lords aren't soft on crime, just sensible

only after serious study of their likely consequences. The Treasury does not settle the Budget by asking the first passenger to alight from a No 11 bus. Nor should the Home Office decide sentencing policy in so simplistic a manner. The man on the top of the bus whom Lady Blatch talks about is assumed to be overwhelmed by prejudices, and indeed Lady Blatch rather glorifies in sharing them.

By itself, I would probably have let her comment go, though it shows how far populism has replaced serious analysis in the Home Office. I was rather more irritated when she went on to argue that it is snobbish to suggest that burglars who steal valuable objects should receive longer sentences than burglars who steal objects of little value. "My noble friend appears to suggest — and I find this almost offensive — that stealing valuable items from people who have such items should be taken more seriously than the persistent burglar who daily terrorises people who are much less fortunate by stealing items of lower value such as a bottle of milk, 50p from a purse or small but essential items from people who do not have very much."

Surely this is an absurd argument. Many of us have at one time or another had a bottle of milk stolen. It is an irritation, but there are very few people for whom it is a catastrophe. It has never terrified anyone I have met. One of the peers who voted for the Labour amendment was the Marquis of Bath. He had a Titian valued at £5 million stolen from Longleat.

Lady Blatch believes that the courts ought to take the theft of a bottle of milk as seriously as the theft of a Titian. She would be hard put to it to find anyone riding on the top of a bus who would share so ridiculous a concern. The man on the top of the bus believes that there should be big penalties for big crimes and little penalties for little crimes. He has a sense of proportion.

Lady Blatch went on to make it clear that this disproportionate severity in the minimum sentences for

William Rees-Mogg

repeated minor burglaries was the true intention of the Bill. She left it no doubt. "I am simply saying that I support the proposals set out in the Bill. If someone burgles persistently, whether he steals a loaf of bread, a pint of milk, or 50p from a purse, he should receive a sentence of at least three years." A young woman, perhaps a single mother, steals three pints of milk, perhaps from neighbouring flats, and gets caught each time. The Government, not just Lady Blatch on the top of her bus, but Michael Howard in the Home Office, the Cabinet, the Prime Minister in Downing Street, all think she should be taken away from her child and

sent to prison for three years, one year for each pint of milk. They would not give the trial judge, whom they probably regard as soft on crime, the discretion of mercy. "Exceptional circumstances" do not constitute a judicial discretion.

I will not go on with Baroness Blatch's speech, except to observe the extreme implausibility of her unqualified assertion that "mandatory penalties will not lead to injustices", of course in some cases they are bound to. The difficulty arises because Michael Howard confuses the need for severe punishment of serious crime with the social problem of the misfits and petty thieves who cause trouble to the police and society by their relatively trivial crimes: if one argues that when there have been no threats or violence, even the third theft of a bottle of milk or its equivalent should never be visited with three years in prison, what sort of reply does one get? One is accused, with wild irrelevance, of being soft on rape, murder, terrorism and Category A drugs.

The Government, whose representative thinks it snobbish to differentiate between stealing a Titian and stealing a bottle of milk, refuses to discriminate between petty crime and serious crime. Yet without such a distinction it is not possible to have any rational policy for preventing, detecting or punishing crime. One can imagine the scene in the Frome police station. The Longleat alarm has gone off, another Titian has vanished from the wall, nothing can be done. All the Somerset and Avon CID are out,

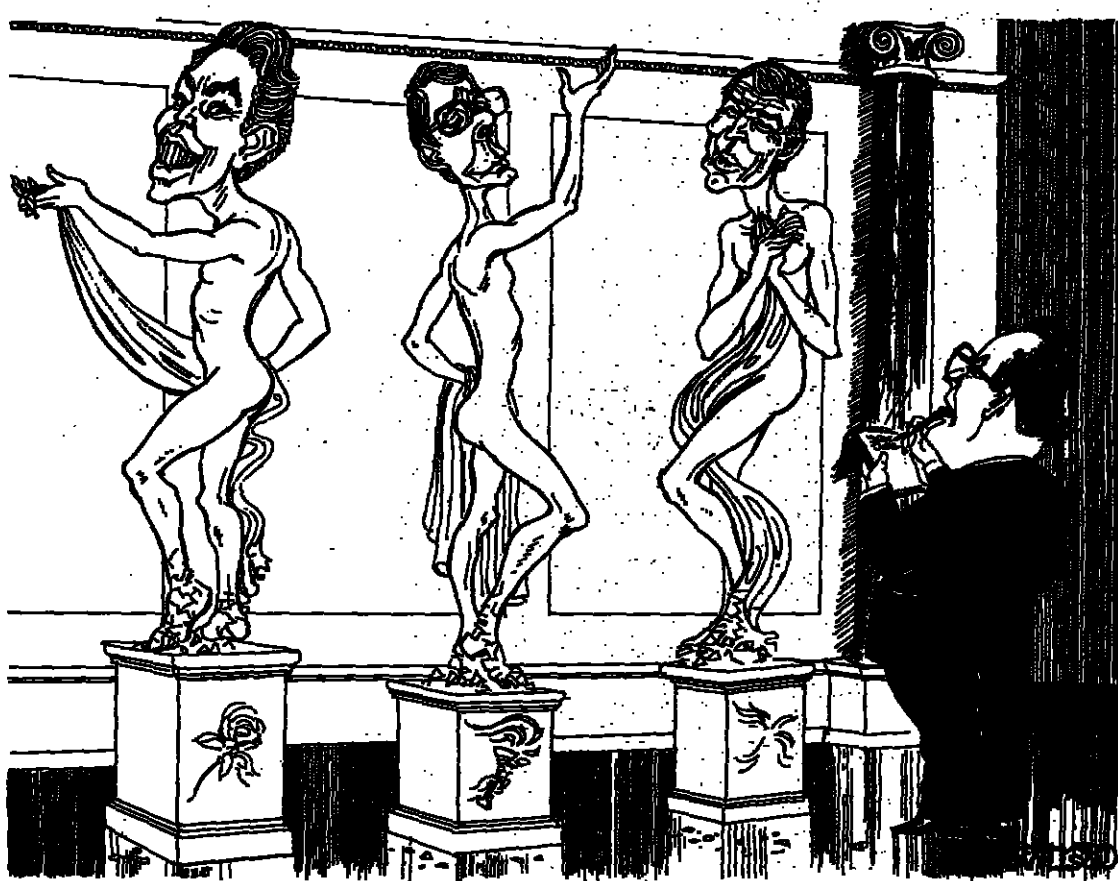
armed with sub-machine guns, to chase the dangerous milk thieves of Norton Malward.

In the event, a combination of 13 Law Lords, most of the crossbench peers, a few bishops, some Conservative, the Labour and Liberal Democrat parties, carried the amendment by 180 votes to 172. After listening to most of the debate I was happy to vote with the majority. But why should such a debate have been necessary? The Government, supported by the great majority in both Houses of Parliament, wants to counter-attack serious crime. It wants to have the police bug terrorists and drug-dealers, and it wants the courts to put rapists away for very long periods. No one is quarrelling with that.

The Government's critics take the view that this rigour towards crime should be accompanied by an equal concern for liberty and justice. We think it is right for the police to bug or burgle the most dangerous and powerful criminals, but we believe that such exceptional police powers need special supervision and prior approval. We think that persistent offenders who commit a serious offence should indeed be given long sentences. But we do not want the petty thief, the inadequate, the mentally ill, the homeless poor, or silly girls and young men to be exposed automatically to inappropriate and unjust sentences for repeated minor offences. We trust the judges, dealing with actual cases, to see that does not happen. We regard an automatic three years in prison for the third petty theft as a grotesque injustice, which will bring British justice itself into disrepute. We are offended by the assertion that ordinary British people are so blind with bloodlust against even petty criminals that every bus has its top seats filled with so many Judge Jeffreys. We want the British virtues of rationality and fairness restored to Home Office policy. That is not weakness; it is common sense.

The Three Ingratiators

Peter Riddell reads short manifestos for and sees the naked truth



The battle of ideas is as important as the battle of soundbites. A party may win office by its campaigning, but it will succeed as a government only if it has won the intellectual debate. This was true of the Liberals after 1906, Labour after 1945 and, more ambiguously, after 1964, and the Tories after 1951 and 1979. Now, the direction is less clear, since Tony Blair has accepted most of the free market and public service reforms introduced since 1979.

The other day I was talking to one of John Major's closest advisers, who expressed, with uncharacteristic passion, the frustration felt in Downing Street that the media did not recognise that the Government had won the key policy arguments. He has a point. Labour is not really challenging the Tories' approach to monetary policy, taxes, public spending, competitiveness, the NHS, education and so forth. Of course Mr Blair is proposing changes of emphasis, many quite important, to improve the current system and make it fairer. But with the big exception of constitutional reform, the "new" Labour programme is largely within the framework established over the past 18 years. That is precisely the complaint of many Labour intellectuals fretting at what they see as Blairite caution.

Labour's repositioning has made life harder for the Tories. This is brought out in three short new books by politician-academics which present the case for the main parties (published today by Penguin at £3.99 each). *Why Vote Conservative?* is by David Willetts, now chairman of the Conservative Research Department; *Why Vote Labour?* is by Tony Wright, a political scientist before his

election as an MP in 1992; and *Why Vote Liberal Democrat?* is by William Wallace, now a life peer and an international relations specialist.

There is a substantial overlap between the Wright and Wallace books, despite the local and personal tensions between Labour and the Liberal Democrats. Their cases turn on the balance between economic efficiency and social cohesion. The strength of the Willetts book is its defence of the free market approach implemented by the Government. Without the measures taken since 1979 — and despite some horrendous errors, largely ignored by Willetts — public spending and taxes would have been much higher and Britain would have been much less competitive. Similarly, far-reaching reforms of the public sector were overdue and necessary. Only a re-elected Tory

government can, he argues, prevent these gains from being eroded.

The weakness in Willetts's case is that he underestimates the social dislocation and divisions that have occurred, and brushes aside the challenge to Britain's political and constitutional conventions from such a long period of one-party rule. His picture of the Blairites as "constitutional militants" who want to abandon self-government to Brussels and transform Britain on the model of continental European social democracy circa 1980 is a grotesque caricature, not least because he accepts that the rest of Europe is abandoning that approach.

The Labour case presented by Tony Wright is a mirror image. He offers an impassioned plea against

the social divisions and dislocations of recent years, the shortcomings in the reformed health service, the increase in child poverty, and the despair of the unemployed. His alternative is based on shared community values and collective action. Social cohesion is for Wright a precondition of economic efficiency. Both Wright and Wallace highlight the shortcomings in our democracy. Wallace's book, the patchiest of the three, also makes a strong case for "green" initiatives.

But Wright's wholesale condemnation of the Tory approach is not consistent with the fiscal caution of "new" Labour. How can Labour values, and a belief in activist government, be reconciled with inherited Tory financial goals? Despite all of Gordon Brown's efforts, a credibility gap still exists. Labour

remains unconvincing on public services in view of its past opposition not just to privatisation but to health and social security changes.

Wright's book should be read alongside the detailed proposals on education, unemployment and business strategy from Richard Layard of the London School of Economics in his new book *What Labour Can Do*. Layard admits the problem of containing public spending. He argues that there is no case for bringing spending below 40 per cent of national income, the Tory target, and that "a slightly higher figure may be necessary to achieve Labour's social objectives". He accepts that this, and tax cuts for low earners, may require above-inflation tax increases on pollution, smoking and alcohol.

If the election were to be decided purely on which party could most convincingly run the government, hold down spending and taxes and operate a free market policy, then the Tories would have a powerful case. But John Major cannot just sell himself and his policies. He is also leader of the Tory party. And the Tories do not look like a party of government. They are fractious and deeply divided.

Nowhere, of course, is this clearer than over Europe. The best chapter in Wallace's book concerns the middle of British foreign policy produced by the need to appease Tory Eurosceptics. Revealingly, David Willetts has just two evasive paragraphs on a single currency. It is hard to see how a re-elected Major Government could pursue a coherent policy that would keep Britain "at the heart of Europe" without splitting the party.

The Tories have run out of time, and the voters' patience. It is no longer enough for the intellectual tide still to be running in the direction of free markets and fiscal and monetary restraint. That would impose serious strains on an incoming Labour government, as it has on the Clinton Administration; but at present what matters is that enough voters believe it is time for a change. As one minister was told by a former supporter: "I don't really disagree with your policies. It's just that I'm fed up with you lot."

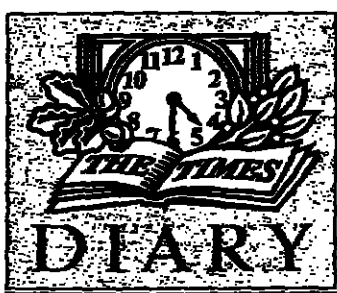
Sisterly feelings

THE DUCHESS of Devonshire decided unexpectedly not to attend the memorial service for her sister Jessica Mitford at the Lyric Theatre in London's Shaftesbury Avenue yesterday evening.

No reason was given for her absence, even though the Duchess was listed as a speaker on the programme along with members of Jessica's family as well as newscaster Jon Snow, John Mortimer and Polly Toynbee. A friend of the Mitford girls said that the Duchess

had been upset by plans for the service.

The memorial for the lady famous for her attack on the funeral industry in her bestseller *The American Way of Death* was to have been idiosyncratic, according to Jon Snow, the master of ceremonies: "The service will particularly concentrate on the debunking of the death industry," he said last week. "We've four undertakers on show, a Cadillac coffin, a DIY disposable coffin, one of which is a



bookshelf in life and a box for death, and a pet's corner for four-legged stiffs."

The Duchess is said to have found the idea distasteful. Although the service was toned down, with only a couple of undertakers displaying their wares, she still chose not to attend. Last week Jessica's other living sister Diana, Lady Moseley, 86, decided not to go either. "Jessica means nothing to me at all," she said of the left-wing sister who once denounced her as a dangerous fascist.

Shine on

IF America's Vice-President, Al Gore, really intends to succeed Bill Clinton in 2000 he will need to ad-

dress the bald question. At a Washington D.C. press conference the other day, Gore — who likes to convey a youthful zest — ill-advisedly bowed his head in front of the television cameras.

Inevitably, the CNN footage clearly captured a Bryan Gouldish bald patch, which the Vice-President tries to conceal by scrapping what little hair he has across the arid waste. It is about as successful as certain other Democrat cover-ups.



● Not for Gillian Clarke the airs and graces of some political wives I could name. As my extract from the Newnham College Roll shows, the Chancellor's wife is becomingly modest about her achievements since she abandoned Cambridge

Wright and Kennerly.
Gillian Clarke (Russett, NIG 1969) ALA MLK
Conservative Party worker; Oxford ship worker.
Julie Cleveland (NIG 1969), CRE MA

and an academic life to support her husband.

Tote trio

FIVE RUNNERS fell last week in the race to succeed Lord Wyatt of Woodford as chairman of the Tote, leaving a shortlist of just three: Peter Jones, a director of the Tote; Lt-Gen Sir William Rous, former PR man for the Army; and Viscount Astor, good egg and member of the Turf Club.

Viscount Astor is an outside chance. Peter Jones is favoured by the racing industry, but odds are shortening on Rous. Lord Wyatt backs him, and Michael Howard makes a habit of appointing the military — notable forces men he has chosen include Admiral Sir

Peter Woodhead (Prisons Ombudsman), General Sir David Ramsbotham (HM's Chief Inspector of Prisons), and Lt Gen Sir John Learmont (the Parkhurst jail inquiry).

● Battle honours are due to Prince Michael of Kent and the crew of Ocean Rover, who yesterday finished a respectable eighth in the BT Global Challenge yacht race. Ocean Rover moved up three places in the last 300 miles, after a crack team of stitchers under the Prince's strict supervision repaired a torn spinnaker.

Avowal

THE DUKE of Norfolk's daughter Lady Marsha Fitzalan, who plays the wife of television's appalling Alan B'stard MP, has suggested that the rounded vowels of the aristocracy may soon become a thing of the past.

She admits to a "very upper-class" accent herself, but she adds that her plum-filled tones are as nothing to those of her forebears. "When I want to do a sort of caricature upper-class voice, I literally mimic my aunts and uncles and members of my family."



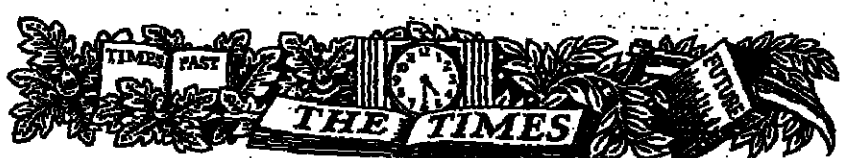
Marsha: plummy
she says on *The Extremely Useful Guide to Accents*, a recording made for Comic Relief.

"They are so laid back that they hardly enunciate anything, and talk from the back of their throats. I can't understand a word they say, really."

P.H.S



The duchess (left) and Jessica Mitford



A HIGHER PRIORITY

Early enlargement of Nato spells danger for Europe

Madeline Albright, who makes her European debut as American Secretary of State this week, is an energetic politician of passionate convictions, who expresses herself with singular bluntness. Among the strongest of these convictions is that America must throw its full weight into the historic task of building "a peaceful and undivided Europe working in partnership with the United States". Part of her task this week will be to prise the governments of the European Union out of their introspective shell. The most urgent reason for Europeans to rise to the Albright challenge is that the centrepiece of her European strategy, the enlargement of Nato by 1999, is dangerously misjudged.

Far from enhancing the security of the European continent, this imminent decision risks creating fresh sources of insecurity, inviting confrontation with Russia and, by weakening Nato's military credibility, impairing the Alliance's capacity to respond to new dangers that wiser policies might avert.

Ms Albright, who insists that she and President Clinton have "no higher priority" than Nato enlargement, prefaced her arrival in Europe with an article in *The Economist* dismissing all criticism as an argument for "fossilised immobility". Nato must enlarge, she said, or be "stuck in the past, risking irrelevance and even dissolution". If this was an implicit threat, critics should not be cowed. Nato's new military doctrines and its successful Partnerships for Peace, currently yielding operational dividends in Bosnia, prove how simplistic it is to make enlargement the acid test of its capacity to adapt.

Ms Albright claims that enlargement would promote the "integration" of Europe — an overtly political task that stretches the remit of a defensive military alliance. But Ms Albright also describes the frontiers of Nato as "freedom's boundaries". Enlargement, then, will create a new dividing line, one likely to be drawn in the first instance along eastern borders of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic where she was born.

Ms Albright may expect these countries "to export stability eastward" rather than see

themselves as having escaped westward; but that will be scant comfort for the countries outside "freedom's boundaries". She cites President Clinton's assertion that eligibility for Nato membership must be determined by "new behaviour, not old history", but since the US has no plans to bring the Baltic states, let alone "robustly democratic" Ukraine into Nato, this is casuistry.

Europe will not be durably secure unless Russia becomes, as did postwar Germany, a stable democracy. Russians of all political persuasions see enlargement as a betrayal of Washington's promise to include it in "a security circle for all of Europe". To avoid feeding Russian phobias about encirclement is wisdom, not appeasement. Ms Albright describes "a close and constructive relationship" with Moscow as one of Nato's vital tasks. This should be Washington's "higher priority", and the process cannot be rushed. It will require years, not the few months between now and the Nato summit in July.

Given time to build habits of military co-operation with Nato, Moscow might conceivably be persuaded that its standing as a great power is fully recognised in the Nato-Russia charter and joint council that America offers. Nato enlargement can wait.

The Clinton Administration claims that Russia is resigned to the inevitable. In private it argues that antagonising Russia by sticking to the timetable is less risky than applying the brakes because this would send "the wrong message" to hard-liners in Moscow. But it is pro-Western Russian modernisers who fear early Nato enlargement most. Has the Clinton Administration no memory of German railway timetables in 1949? Neither in Europe nor in America has the public been alerted to the momentous security implications of Nato enlargement, which each Nato parliament will be called upon to ratify. Let the US by all means press the EU to hasten its own enlargement, a step which would have nothing but benign consequences for European peace. But if it is serious about a safer Europe, it should put Nato enlargement on hold. It is still not too late.

ULSTER ARITHMETIC

Unionists have little to gain from the fall of the Government

David Trimble makes an unlikely coquette. But no parliamentarian has been so assiduously courted this Valentine weekend, and none so blushing reticent about their intentions. Since Labour decided last week to move a vote of censure on Douglas Hogg's handling of BSE, both Opposition and Government have been sending billets-doux to Belfast. Labour whips have altered the composition of backbench committees to ally Unionist concerns. The Conservatives have signalled that their "certified herd" scheme will see Ulster farmers benefit. Given the Tory failure so far to make real progress in lifting the beef ban despite all manner of initiatives, Mr Trimble may be tempted to throw in his lot with Labour and maximise credit with the most likely incoming administration. That would, however, be a grave tactical and strategic error.

In the interests of his party and province, Mr Trimble should stay his hand tonight. Mr Hogg may be a serial bungler. Ulster's farmers a conspicuous casualty of the Government's failure, but the emotional pleasure in delivering a bloody nose would be paid for by influence forfeited. As long as Mr Major's administration survives, Unionists have a receptive ear in Downing Street. The Prime Minister's commitment to the peace process, which Dublin does not doubt, means that Mr Major will not act to inflame moderate nationalist sentiment. But he can go some way to meeting the legitimate Unionist concerns in the weeks he has left.

Whatever he achieves in Brussels for Ulster's cattle, the Prime Minister has it in his power to advance accountability in Northern Ireland. A Grand Committee for Ulster which matched those for Scotland

and Wales would give Northern Ireland's elected representatives a welcome opportunity to flex democratic muscle, and prove that the parliamentary path can secure results. A Unionist Party that had declined to vote against the Government tonight would be better placed to secure that gain and win other improvements at the margins.

Mr Trimble may fear that support, however grudging, for Mr Major will see Tony Blair alienated and Ian Paisley exhilarated. He should not worry. If Mr Blair is serious about the peace process he cannot afford any vindictiveness towards the leader of Ulster's biggest party. Moreover, the later the election and the smaller any Labour majority, the better for Mr Trimble. In Ulster itself, few electors are more likely to appreciate a leader who has used Parliament to secure advantages for the province rather than as an echo chamber for indignation.

Mr Trimble's calculations may be base, but that does not mean his motives are. He has a duty to use the mechanisms of democracy to safeguard the greater number in Northern Ireland who wish to keep the Union secure. Those who urge Mr Trimble most volubly to abandon the Tories have not been in the vanguard of those defending Ulster's democratic majority. Whatever the result tonight, the Tory Party is more likely than its rivals to prove a friend of the Union in the future. Tory inconstancy in the past may incline Mr Trimble to abstention, but any action that would make a Labour victory more likely would only delight Sinn Féin the more. Republicans hope for an early election and a Labour landslide. The Unionists have, potentially, little to gain and much to lose by precipitating the fall of this Government.

SUGAR AND SPICE

The British music industry makes billions as well as bad girls

The Spice Girls do not present the usual image of entrepreneurs. But they are merchant ventures of the age. Like Francis Drake and Walter Raleigh, in behaviour as well as appearance they are unconventional and a bit piratical. Their politics may surprise. Their claim that Baroness Thatcher was the original Spice Girl is cheeky. But this group of five young women, including one who first made her mark by taking her clothes off for page three, from one of the world's most successful marketing operations. This weekend they climbed the Everest to No 1 in the US league table called Hot 100.

And they represent an economic phenomenon as well as a cultural one. Next week the Brit Awards, Britain's self-congratulatory prize-giving of the music industry, will no doubt make headlines for bad behaviour, arrogance and childishness. But behind the hype and the hysteria, the numbers are deadly earnest. Spotty-faced youths strumming guitars may deafen and disgruntle fogies. But they are the future of Britain's fastest growing industry. Music is now worth £5.5 billion a year. The value of UK record sales rose last year by 6.1 per cent. Compact discs, until recently mocked as unnecessary replacements for vinyl, now shift 160 million units a year. They are the most popular sound carrier in the history of the industry. A generation ago the Beatles invented a

British sound. For the first time this century British popular music led the way, instead of being a pale reflection of what was happening in the USA. The Beatles were awarded MBEs for services to exports. Since the Beatles the domestic market for music sales has multiplied more than sixfold. When asked how they spend their leisure, 81 per cent of Britons aged between 16 and 24 reply that they listen to CDs, tapes or records at least once a week. Such canned music comes second only to television as a leisure pursuit. The British music industry has now grown bigger than shipbuilding, electronic components and water supply, with little help from governments that pour money into more conventional enterprises.

Pop may attract a generally frivolous or esoteric press. But it does not need official encouragement or subsidy. The President of the Board of Trade does not include many record producers on his world cavalcades to drum up exports for Britain. But the Spice Girls and their promoters are examples of the buccaneering spirit that has always made British industry. Purists may scoff at their success. But hundreds of bands, record promoters and song-writers are noisily earning a fortune for themselves — and Britain. The Spice Girls, with their brash, enterprising culture are, as they claim, heiresses to the spirit of Lady Thatcher.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9KN Telephone 0171-782 5000

'Trial by media' in Lawrence case

From Mr Ronald Thwaites, QC

Sir, As one of the defence counsel in the trial of those charged with the murder of Stephen Lawrence at the Old Bailey in April 1996 may I attempt to shed light on some important facts which seem to have been forgotten in the excitement surrounding the inquest this week into his death (reports, article and leading article, February 15).

At trial, the issue was one of identification; no one disputed that Stephen Lawrence had been the victim of an unprovoked racist attack or that he had been murdered. The sole witness, as to identification, had a fleeting glimpse of one of the attackers, at night, in difficult and shocking circumstances. He had given several different contradictory accounts and changed his evidence again in front of the trial judge, Mr Justice Curtis.

In the course of his reasoned judgment, Mr Justice Curtis said of the witness: "I am entirely satisfied that where recognition or identification is concerned he simply does not know... whether he is on his head or his heels... Nearly three years further on in effect he has identified three, if not four [different] people as the stabber."

Thus the judge excluded the evidence of identification on the grounds that there was no true recognition and further that the evidence was "tainted": no judge, conscientiously applying the law to the facts, could have come to a different decision. He concluded: "Adding one injustice to another does not cure the first injustice done to the Lawrence family."

The prosecution decided themselves to offer no further evidence against the three accused, who were then automatically acquitted. The reason why the case was abandoned did not involve any fault or failure of the criminal legal system or those who participated in it: there was insufficient evidence to continue with it.

There is now (reported) talk of a civil action. But in order to prove a serious crime in the civil courts, it is necessary for the plaintiff to produce sufficient evidence to prove the case to a standard equivalent to the criminal standard of proof.

The notion that it will somehow be easier to succeed against acquitted defendants in the civil court is likely to mislead and ultimately disappoint all those who sympathise with the Lawrence family's desperate and understandable quest for justice. Whether sitting alone, or with a jury, a judge must filter evidence to ensure that it is fit for forensic consumption.

The parts of the media that have challenged the acquitted defendants to "sue us if you dare" will have won few admirers: it is well known that the acquitted defendants are unemployed, without resources and therefore cannot take proceedings for defamation, regardless of the provocation offered. To bait them with headline taunts therefore involves newspapers in little risk, requires no courage and will be seen by informed observers as a cynical exploitation of a truly tragic event.

Yours faithfully,
RONALD THWAITES,
10 Kings Bench Walk, Temple, EC4A 3DF, February 15.

From Mr Jonathan Caplan, QC

Sir, Finality of verdicts can never be the dominant principle in our society. If it was, the media could never have utilised their considerable resources — as they have so valuably in the past — to press for alleged miscarriages of justice to be set right. What in principle is the difference when the media comment, however forcefully, on an acquittal? Are only parts of the judicial process to be open to public scrutiny?

Of course, reputations can and will be affected but that is a matter for the law of libel. Whether this area of the law is beyond the pocket of most, and whether legal aid should be extended to defamation, is a quite separate issue.

The reaction of the Home Secretary that the *Daily Mail* "haven't" done anything against the law unless of course these men claim that the piece has been defamatory" was surely, therefore, correct and that of the Bar Council, which condemned the newspaper's action, was wrong.

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN CAPLAN,
Five Paper Buildings, Temple, EC4A 3DF, February 15.

From Ms Sandra Sanglin

Sir, I am struck by the qualitative differences between the cases of the two Mrs Lawrences, one white, one black. The wife of the headmaster, Philip Lawrence, has received national support, with large numbers of high-profile personalities wanting to join her cause, and no stone left unturned in bringing the killer of her husband to justice.

The mother of Stephen Lawrence, on the other hand, is still fighting to find justice for her son. I am feeling very uneasy about a system that appears to accord different treatment to different individuals depending on their colour and standing in the community.

Both Mrs Lawrences deserve justice to have been done, but can we truly say that that has been the case?

Your etc,
SANDRA SANGLIN,
83 Roxeth Hill, Harrow, Middlesex, February 14.

Dangers of current moves towards Nato enlargement

From Sir Rodric Braithwaite, GCMG

Sir, The debate on Nato enlargement has still not got down to brass tacks. You report (February 10) see also letters, February 12) that Nato officials know that they must make a real effort to convince not only the Russians but — more damagingly — the US Congress that enlargement is in everyone's interest. That is a sad comment on a policy which is now nearly five years old.

There is a real dilemma here. The countries of Eastern Europe want the West to assure their security, and fear a "new Yalta" in which their interests could once again be carved up between Russia and the rest of us. The Russians believe that they should have a genuine say in managing the security of a continent to which they belong and from which they have so often faced invasion. Both sets of aspirations are entirely understandable.

The West has found no convincing way of reconciling them. Enlargement can no doubt be negotiated successfully with a small group of Central European countries. But it is not a foregone conclusion that even a limited enlargement will get through the parliaments of Nato's existing members; or that it will then be carried forward to cover the countries of Eastern Europe who believe they are most at risk.

And the *quid pro quo* which the alliance has so far offered the Russians — a joint body with no power to take serious decisions — misses the essential point. There is a real chance that at the end of the process the East Europeans will feel betrayed once again, while the Russians are left to fester beyond the Eastern marches, potentially another *renouveau* power of a kind that Europe has known too often.

What is needed is a bargain. If the Russians demonstrate their formal commitment to the status quo which emerged after 1991 (including the independence of the Baltic States and Ukraine, about which some Russians are still equivocal) they should be

given equal membership in a European security body capable of taking serious decisions. This could be a beefed-up Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, to which the West's objections are largely spurious or a transformed Nato, which some Western officials believe is possible, though I do not. The matter is difficult. It needs imagination and will. So far neither have been forthcoming.

This will not necessarily end in violent tears. But unless the Alliance gets a grip, we shall certainly hear some stifled sobs. Nato officials believe they can get a deal with the Russians in time for the July summit. I wish them every success. But my optimism is measured.

Yours faithfully,
RODRIC BRAITHWAITE,
(Ambassador in Moscow, 1988-92),
79 Hampstead Way, NW11,
February 12.

From Sir Clive Rose, GCMG

Sir, The proposal for a Nato-Russia Council (report, February 10) raises many questions. Sir Patrick Duffy and Alan Lee Williams (letter, February 12) have rightly identified the crucial one: what voting rights would Russia have?

Decisions in the North Atlantic Council are traditionally reached by consensus. There is no provision in the Treaty for a majority vote. Nor, in my experience, was such a procedure ever resorted to. Of course the requirement for consensus does in practice give each member, whether it be the United States or Luxembourg, the opportunity to delay a decision, or in the last resort, to impose a veto. But throughout its history Nato has shown itself adept at avoiding "last resorts". This may sometimes have involved arm twisting, but in the end consensus has been reached. It is essential, when decisions go to the heart of the vital security concerns of all members, that nothing should be done to dilute this process.

There are only two ways in which

Russia could be given a "vote" in a Nato-Russia Council. One is to adopt a system of majority voting in which Russia would be one of 17 (or in due course 20) equal participants. The other is to give the single Russian vote equal weight with the consensus decision of Nato members, which could be tantamount to a veto. The first would hardly be likely to appeal to the Russians; moreover, by undermining the basis of the Nato mutual security guarantee it could lead to the disintegration of the alliance. The alternative of a Russian veto is patently unacceptable.

So we are left with consultation, which should be as frank and close as possible, with the aim of reaching "consensus" between Nato and Russia. In the last resort however the integrity of the Alliance's right to make its own decisions must be maintained. The security of all its members depends on it.

Yours faithfully,
CLIVE ROSE
(UK Permanent Representative on the North Atlantic Council, 1979-82),
Chimney House,
Lavenham, Sudbury, Suffolk,
February 12.

From Mr Richard Connaughton

Sir, It is not time that Nato stopped meandering and returned to first principles? To fulfil its core obligation to its current members, Nato must ensure that Russia is not isolated by this pointless exercise in expansion aimed at providing the states of Central and Eastern Europe with security guarantees they do not need.

It is time that one or more Nato states, unencumbered by supplementary interests, broke ranks and called a halt.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD CONNAUGHTON,
(Author, *The Nature of Future Conflict*, Leo Cooper, 1995),
Waltham,
Nettlecombe, Bridport, Dorset,
February 11.

Modern worship

From the Reverend Nicholas R. Ralph

Sir, The idea that if only we had stuck to the Book of Common Prayer our churches would be full of young people, is so ridiculous that I am amazed and a little worried to see it revived (letters, February 13).

Like many others I work very hard to find ways to make the Church accessible to young people. I know not a single young person who finds BCP services helpful for worshipping God; on the other hand, I know plenty who find modern services — with their variety, flexibility and, most of all, personal involvement — to be helpful. Such services do not need to be "happy clappy", but if some people find God in that particular style, who are we to argue? Modern services can still be reverent and respectful.

What is needed in our parishes is a variety of styles — some would call this niche marketing. I will happily take a BCP service if that is what people want, but not to the exclusion of all else. Too often, those who make the most noise about particular styles of service fail to support them by turning up regularly — unlike those

who favour the more modern services. The economics are actually very simple.

Yours sincerely,
NICK RALPH,
27 Seaview Road,
Hayling Island, Hampshire,
February 13.

From Mr Jock Knight

Sir, The bishops who were so loud in their condemnation of the recent remarks of Lord Runcie (report, February 10) might benefit from looking at the Muslim church. There are no raves or trendy services in the mosques. Not a word of the Koran has been altered, while Anglicans have several versions of the Bible, have introduced the Alternative Service Book in preference to the Book of Common Prayer and have messed about with the words of much-loved traditional hymns.

Anglican congregations are dwindling. The followers of Islam appear to increase.

Yours faithfully,
JOCK KNIGHT,
Broomlands,
Hatherton, Nantwich, Cheshire,
February 12.

Windfall tax

From Mr Michael Ivens

Sir, The advice of Mr Michael Beloff, QC, on Labour's windfall tax (report, February 13) is at variance with Aims of Industry's view that Labour's plans are likely to come unstuck by a challenge based on European law, as well as a challenge in the British courts and long, drawn out complaints from private objectors. Mr Beloff's opinion is, however, naturally welcomed by the Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer.

We believe Mr Brown's optimism is misplaced and is unlikely to provide him with a quick financial raid that will save his economic plans. He does not face the dire problem of how to choose which firms to tax and which to turn a blind eye to without causing his proposed Bill to be hybrid (affecting private as well as public interests).

Seasonal variations

From Colonel A. L. Mallinson

Sir, Your complaint (Diary, February 11) objects to being offered Christmas cake on a British Airways flight in February, but it is perfectly possible to eat it, in season, in that month. In the Church's calendar the season of Christmas does not end until the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Purification of Mary BV) — on February 2.

Well done BA for liturgical correctness. I wonder if they have given up serving alcohol for Lent?

Yours etc,
ALLAN MALLINSON,
The Cavalry and Guards Club,
127 Piccadilly, W1,
February 12.

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

Dire problems for Labour have occurred in the past through hybridity and the attempted nationalisation of shipbuilding and aircraft industries. Mr Brown is loquacious on how he wants to spend the money he gets from a windfall tax, but is reticent on the problems of hybridity: these are likely to lead to a public bill, as well as a private one with a committee, producing a field-day for protesters and objectors and, as in the past, considerable delays for legislation.

It may be electorally damaging for Mr Brown to state which companies and which shareholders and pensioners will be affected, but that is surely his duty.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL IVENS,
(Consultant),
Aims of Industry,
2 Mulgrave Road, NW10,
February 13.

Spain and Gibraltar

From Professor Emeritus Philip S. James

Sir, With all respect to my dear Spanish friends I find their Government's approach to the Gibraltar problem more fit for sympathy than praise (Spanish Ambassador's letter, February 12; see also letters, February 1, 5, 13). Spain's claim to Gibraltar is an "historic" one and all such claims are nonsense. It would be as fitting for the Moors to reclaim Andalusia as for the Spaniards to reclaim Gibraltar. It would be even more fitting for the Moors to demand the cession of the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla.

In any case, since it suits the Spaniards to be Federalists what have they to complain about? Is not Gibraltar a part of Europe?

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP S. JAMES,
Chestnut View,
Mill Lane, Whitfield,
Brockley, Northamptonshire,
February 12.

English poets spurned

From Mr John Davie

Sir, The Poetry Society and the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority have both recently deplored the fact that the luminaries of classical English poetry, such as Milton and Pope, are being dropped from the school syllabus in favour of modern, more "accessible" authors.

The same trend is discernible also in the teaching of modern languages: in the admirable drive to improve linguistic skills little, if any, space is found now for the riches of foreign literature before the 20th century, as if young people have nothing to learn from Dante, Goethe and Racine. Happily this is not true of the Classics, where even GCSE students are required to read Homer and Virgil in the original, and so, paradoxically, are in some cases better equipped to tackle the English classics than are some English teachers.

The idea that young people should be "protected" from great English poets on the grounds of their difficulty is insulting and arrogant. Perhaps all English courses at university should have a compulsory element that acknowledges the debt of our country's literature to Greece and Rome.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN DAVIE,
(Head of Classics),
St Paul's School,
Lonsdale Road, SW13,
February 9.

No smoke...

From Mr J. B. Booth

Sir, Is not the phrase, "smoke-filled rooms" — identified by "a senior Whitehall source" as the natural habitat for civil servants such as Sir John Kerr (report, February 8) — now long overdue for removal from the choice of expressions available to journalists?

I retired from public service over five years ago and by then most of the meetings I attended in Whitehall took place in rooms where smoking was banned or actively discouraged. Fortunately, I was not required to venture into the "darker recesses of government" — but perhaps even there smoke-reduction measures are allowing more light to penetrate. Or is that wishful thinking?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN BOOTH,
10 Wymond Green,
Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire,
February 10.

Heavy weather

From Mr Philip Davey

Sir, The television weather presenters were first to fall foul of it, and now you are doing it too. They started with "thick" frost, and now you've followed their "heavy" fog (News in Brief, February 11).

Could anybody explain the thinking behind "thick" frost and "heavy" fog please?

Presumably we will soon have sharp fog and thick rain?

Yours faithfully,
P. C. DAVEY,
28 Bentley Road,
Tacolneston, Norfolk,
February 11.

OBITUARIES

DOROTHY FOSDICK

Dorothy Fosdick, American foreign policy expert, died on February 5 aged 83. She was born on April 17, 1913.

ALTHOUGH Dorothy Fosdick's name might not be well known except by the biographers of Adlai Stevenson, who had been her lover in the early 1950s, her behind-the-scenes influence on American foreign policy was immense. For thirty years she acted as chief foreign policy adviser to Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson, a power in the Democratic party and a sometime Presidential contender, whose views on international policies were sought by presidents of both parties and all ideologies. The easing of emigration restrictions from countries such as the Soviet Union into the United States was very much Fosdick's work.

A tiny woman, standing only 5ft 1in, Fosdick was feared by many of the big men in Washington. Though she shrank from the limelight, she was not frightened of debate, and would jab her opponents in the chest with her finger to make a point. "She had no personal ambition," said her sister. "She only wanted to save the world."

Her father was the Rev Harry

Emerson Fosdick, a celebrated liberal theologian, who brought his two daughters up in a family apartment at the Union Theological Seminary in New York. While her older sister Elinor trained to be a doctor, Dorothy gravitated towards the theological. She took classes in government and philosophy at Smith College, from which she graduated *summa cum laude*, and taught while she was taking a doctorate in public law from Columbia University.

She had no idea where her career would take her, but was interested in world events. In particular, she had been much distressed by the Senate's failure to ratify the founding treaty of the League of Nations (her uncle Raymond Fosdick had been appointed Under Secretary of the League).

During the war, like many bright young women in American colleges, she was recruited to Washington, and put to work for the ambiguously titled Division of Special Research. Serving on the delegations to the Dumbarton Oaks and San Francisco conferences, she also attended early sessions of the United Nations. In 1948 she was promoted to the newly-formed Policy Planning Staff, a small think tank which helped to shape the Marshall Plan and Nato.



Adlai Stevenson she had known professionally since the war, and as his political ambitions fermented into a presidential campaign in 1952. Fosdick became his lover and campaign adviser. He, however, was already married, and having a long-term liaison with another mistress, the journalist Alicia Patterson. Divorce and remarriage would have damaged him politically, so the complicated arrangement lasted un-

til his election defeat, when Stevenson traded in both old girlfriends for new romantic interests. Fosdick never married, nor ever seemed to regret the fact. Privately, she was doubtful that Stevenson would have made a good president.

In 1954 she began a platonic and more successful professional partnership with the new Senator, Henry Jackson, on whose staff she remained until his death in 1983. Jackson shared her passion for liberal social causes, but was more interested in domestic policy when Fosdick first met him. She persuaded him to pursue her foreign policy ideas. In the "bunker" of Jackson's loyal staff, so-called because of the cramped office space they shared, she was known as the "bunker's bubble" — the Yiddish term for grandmother.

Her proudest achievement was her work on the Jackson-Vanik Amendment of 1974, which limited countries that would enjoy the status of "most favoured nation" with the United States to those who lived up to their commitment on human rights, and who allowed emigration. More than a quarter of a million Jews emigrated from the Soviet Union to the United States because of the new legislation. Alexander Solzhenitsyn called the

amendment "a profound message that mankind's sole salvation lies in everyone making everything his business."

She also made several trips to China with Jackson, in pre-Nixon days, and was pleased with their success in opening up communication with that nation. Another of her achievements came during the Yom Kippur War, when she persuaded Jackson to use his contacts to supply arms to the Israelis, a move which had initially been blocked by the Administration.

Jackson never achieved his dearest ambition to become president, a post for which he ran twice in 1972 and 1976. But he remained a valued adviser to Democratic and Republican Presidents up to his death in 1983, just after he and Fosdick had returned from their fourth trip to China.

Fosdick stayed on long enough to hand over the reins to her successor and then retired to edit a book of Jackson's speeches. She also wrote *What is Liberty?* and *Common Sense and World Affairs*. Though she had no direct survivors, she remained close to her sister, her nephew and niece, and their five children, all of whom survive her.

THOMAS SNOW

Thomas Snow, CMG, retired diplomat, died on January 20, aged 106. He was born on May 21, 1890.

TOM SNOW's hopes of crowning his diplomatic career with a front-rank ambassadorial posting were dashed in the late 1930s when he crossed swords with Whitehall over Government policy. As head of the British mission in Helsinki, he foresaw Soviet aggression against Finland and urged his masters in London to act accordingly. He sent his own family home and insisted that other dependents should also leave.

Snow had read all the signs correctly and when the Soviet Union declared war on Finland, bombing Helsinki in late 1939, he had to act on his own advice and evacuate the mission — resending it in a safe place in the countryside.

But he was telling Whitehall what it did not want to hear. With Britain already confronting Germany, Chamberlain's Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, was anxious to maintain a working relationship with Moscow. The availability of raw materials like timber was a powerful factor.

Snow's problem, it has been said, was that he could not help telling people when he was right. But for that fatal flaw — if flaw it was — he might well have climbed to the top of the diplomatic service.

As it was, instead of moving up a rung, as he might have expected on leaving Helsinki after three years in early 1940, he was transferred sideways to a similar post in Bogota. It was there in Colombia that he spent most of the Second World War, eventually changing his title from minister to ambassador — a job description used more sparingly in those days.

In 1946 Snow was moved as minister to Switzerland, taking charge of the British legation in Bern, a capital he had served in before as a young diplomat. A gifted linguist who was fluent in French and German, he not only spent three happy years there on his last posting but settled in Switzerland after his retirement — to become the oldest man around Montreux. But although he never spoke of it, perhaps he was tempted to reflect on what might have been.

Thomas Maitland Snow was born into a banking family in Devon. An impoverished forebear had migrated to Portugal around 1790 and prospered in the port trade during the Napoleonic Wars. Returning first to Exmouth, then Exeter, he had founded a successful wine merchant's business, eventually buying up the local bank — since taken over by what is now NatWest.

Snow was an exhibitor at Winchester, from where he won a scholarship to New College, Oxford. He was his family's third generation of

double Wykehamists. He took a first and a second in Mods and Greats, then, after spending some time on the Continent, came top of the Foreign Office (FO) entrance examination.

Entering the FO in 1914, Snow served as a rising young diplomat in Norway, Greece, Switzerland, Spain and Poland, then as a counsellor in Japan. His first posting as a head of mission came in 1935 when he was appointed minister in Cuba, and he moved from there to Finland two years later.

Although he did not seek a second career, Snow led an active social life in retirement — moving home several times around Lake Geneva. Thought to be the oldest former British diplomat, he was a remarkable example of longevity. Not only was he a formidable intellectual whose



range of interests included nuclear physics and metaphysics, but he kept pace with the latest developments in literature and art. He read voraciously in English, French and German and could converse on almost any topic.

At the age of 105 he could still recite verbatim the satirical Latin poem he had composed as an undergraduate about one of Lloyd George's pre-1914 Budgets. Yet he had little time for small talk. He had been brought up to believe that one should speak only when one had something worth saying. He always had something worth saying himself, but it must have been a daunting thought for dinner guests.

The local authorities in Montreux made a fuss of him, sending a birthday card every year since his centenary. When they once asked him what present he would like, he asked for a new fishing licence "so that I might go fishing with my grand-daughter". He had fished throughout the world for most of his life. At 104, however, with failing eyesight, this sounded a somewhat whimsical aspiration.

Snow's first marriage was dissolved and he is survived by his second wife Sylvia, a Swiss-Hungarian, whom he married, 1949, and by two sons of his first marriage. A third son died from leukaemia 16 years ago.

HANS TISDALL

Hans Tisdall, artist and designer, died on January 31 aged 86. He was born in Munich on August 14, 1910.

FIRST and foremost a painter, Hans Tisdall was enthralled by the luminosity and grandeur of colour. Yet he also retained a strong figurative streak in his art. Attracted by the control and the certainty of the drawn line, he blended this with a sensuous use of colour and tone in the designs for which he became well known. His murals, mosaics and tapestries adorn the walls of public buildings all over Britain. He also designed what has become the trademark lettering for the bookjackets of the publishers Jonathan Cape.

As a teacher for many years at the Central College of Art and Design, Tisdall's sensitivity to the breadth of European culture — he was German by birth — was particularly valuable to his students. Their approach both to life and art became, as the critic Bryan Robinson once put it, "a little different to what it might have been without his quizzical presence, partly self-deprecating and partly rather grand, faintly dandified, always amused."

Born Hans John Knox Aufseeser, Hans Tisdall as he was later known, came of a family of artists. His parents' studios bewitched him even as a child: "the easels, multitude of brushes, the canvases and, especially, the lovely smells of turpentine, oils and varnishes." In 1928 he entered Munich's Academy of Fine Arts and the next year was apprenticed to the sculptor Misley Kogan, travelling to Paris and

then living in an artists' colony in Ancona on the Adriatic coast, before coming to Britain at the age of 20, in 1930.

His first employment in an advertising agency was very brief — the monotonous discipline did not suit his temperament. So, determining to follow a career as a painter instead, he rented a studio at No 6 Fitzroy Street. Duncan Grant and Vanessa Bell lived next door, but although they shared many interests, Tisdall never allowed himself to be lured into Bloomsbury circles.

He preferred to spend time instead by the sea in Hastings, painting the boats and sails and fishermen's nets. The sea and its associated landscapes were always to remain an inspiration to him and later, when his work became more abstract, its motifs and forms could still be traced. Yet Tisdall was not a recluse. In his gregarious youth, he said, the only way he could do any work at all was to go up to the studio, lock the door, and turn the key into the garden below.

In 1935 Tisdall was commissioned to produce his first large-scale mural paintings and his first book jackets for Jonathan Cape. The next year he was awarded a Medal of Honour at the International Exhibition in Paris for his work for the British Pavilion. This was followed by a number of other commissions to decorate clubs and buildings, including in 1939, to design mural decorations for the liner *Queen Elizabeth*. These were never completed, however, as the ship was converted into a troop carrier for the duration of the war.

Tisdall was enlisted into the



Civil Defence Corps in 1940 from where he went on to work at the Ministry of Information. But he still found time for his painting, completing his boldly coloured illustrations to Oliver Hill's children's books *Balbus* (1944) and *Wheels* (1946).

As soon as the war was over Tisdall mounted his first one-

man exhibition in London at the Leger Galleries. It was a success and followed by another the next year. He also began to teach, taking a lectureship at London's Central School of Art and Design in 1947 as well as teaching occasionally at Dartington Hall and in Venice.

The Festival of Britain in

educational establishments and public buildings. His tapestries in particular were admired, with their large-scale patterns abstracted from natural or historical motifs. In 1964 he exhibited at the International Tapestry Biennale in Lausanne and in 1969 at the International Tapestry Exhibition in New York. He also held several one-man exhibitions of his paintings both in London — at the Reid, Leveque and Hanover galleries — and abroad, particularly in Düsseldorf.

Throughout his life, Tisdall kept a diary in the form of notebooks which over the years extended to 25 volumes. Exhibited in a 1988 exhibition, they gave a fascinating, witty and at times wholly irreverent insight into his long career. He celebrated his 80th birthday two years later with a show at the Albemarle Gallery of work done over 30 years — though mostly since 1966.

If his later work moved gradually towards an iconic abstraction, it retained always the freshness and enthusiasm of youth. Nor did Tisdall ever seem affected by stiff divisions which conventionally divide art from design, representation from abstraction, or experiment from decoration. He painted until the end of his life. "If you give up working you become like an old machine gathering dust," he wrote. "So, like a dancer, you must always hop about or else you'll get stiff."

In 1941 Tisdall married Isabel Gallegos. In 1964 she started her own weaving company, Tamesa Fabrics, for which Tisdall made many designs. He is survived by her and by their two daughters.

AIR MARSHAL SIR BARRY DUXBURY

Air Marshal Sir Barry Duxbury, KCB, CBE, director and chief executive of the Society of British Aerospace Companies since 1990, died of cancer on January 25 aged 63. He was born on January 23, 1934.

BARRY DUXBURY was one of a small handful of RAF navigators who have climbed to the rank of air marshal and been knighted. He was, unusually, identified early as a high flier, holding such coveted appointments on the way up as Principal Staff Officer to the Chief of the Air Staff and Secretary to the Chiefs of Staff Committee.

It was the contacts and knowledge of Whitehall that he gained from posts like these which attracted the Society of British Aerospace Companies (SBAC) when the Society was looking for a new chief executive in 1989 — just as Duxbury retired from the services as Air Officer Commanding 18 Group, the

maritime air command in which he had spent the bulk of his RAF career.

The aerospace industry was having to adjust to fiercely competitive new markets as governments in Britain and elsewhere were under pressure to trim their budgets at the end of the Cold War. The SBAC, moreover, has been faced with a special problem of its own, as the Ministry of Defence's plans to close its airfield at Farnborough, Hants, have posed questions about the future of the Farnborough Air Show — the SBAC's two-yearly international show-case. It was against this background that Duxbury began work there seven years ago. He became secretary of the Defence Industries Council at the same time.

Yet John Barry Duxbury had started his ascent to the top on the bottom rung. Born at Nelson in Lancashire and educated at grammar schools in Nelson itself and at Rossall, Blackpool, he had signed

on for three years in the RAF — instead of the obligatory two years' National Service. Commissioned in 1954 he had then converted to a long-term career. After serving as a navigator in a succession of maritime air squadrons, Duxbury spent some time at Boscombe Down and other trials and experimental establishments.

At one time he was involved with development of the revolutionary strike aircraft the TSR2 — later to be cancelled because of escalating costs in the 1960s.

More significantly, in view of his specialisation, he was closely connected with the emerging jet-powered Nimrod — the maritime patrol aircraft developed on the airframe of the Comet airliner and introduced as a replacement for the turbo-prop Shackleton which was at last being retired after years of stalwart service. The Nimrod has been widely recognised as one of the most successful British defence aircraft since the Second World

War and was a tireless Cold War workhorse.

Duxbury carried out some of the early trials of its navigational equipment and later wrote some of the tactical training manuals.

He did a year at the Canadian Forces Staff College before commanding 201 maritime patrol squadron at Kinloss, then was Principal Staff Officer to Air Chief Marshal Sir Denis Spotswood between 1971 and 1974. He commanded the maritime reconnaissance station RAF St. Mawgan in Cornwall as a group captain, 1976-77, and from 1978 to 1980 was Secretary to the Chiefs of Staff Committee. This was an appointment which hugely widened his Whitehall experience, a necessary component of getting into the higher echelons of the Service.

After a year on the directing staff of the Royal College of Defence Studies, he was made Air Secretary — a post in which he was responsi-

ble for RAF officers' careers — before moving to his final posting as AOC 18 Group in 1986. The job which involves working closely alongside the Royal Navy, also gave him a Nato "hat" as Commander Maritime Air Eastern Atlantic and Channel. It brought him back to that part of the Air Force with which he was most familiar, and which he most enjoyed.

Barry Duxbury was a well-liked, unpretentious officer — far removed from the extrovert image of the fighter pilot. His style was one of quiet authority, which was leavened by great kindness — exemplified during his two years as Air Secretary.

Off-duty he painted landscapes in oils and indulged his passion for photography. He was also a keen radio ham.

A close family man, he is survived by his wife Joan, whom he married when he was 20, and by their son.



Church appointments

The Rev James Francis, Assistant Curate (NSM), Sunderland St Chad; to be Assistant Curate (NSM), Sunderland Team Ministry (Durham).
The Rev Guy Harrison, Curate, Wimborne Minster and Holt St James Team Ministry; to be Chaplain, Dorothy House Foundation Hospice, Winsley (Salisbury).
The Rev Peter Hart, Priest-in-charge, Warndon, St Nicholas (Worcester); to be the Rector, Northchurch (St Albans).
The Rev Diana Hartley, Assistant Curate, St Saviour, Peckham; to be Assistant Curate, St Barnabas, Dulwich (Southwark).
Canon David Holloway, Vicar, St Gregory, Horfield; to be also Rural Dean of Horfield (Bristol).
The Rev Richard James, Priest-in-charge, Christ Church, Shroton Hill; to be Vicar, St Mark and St Margaret, Plumstead (Southwark).
The Rev Terence Johnson, Vicar, Budbrooke St Michael, Warwick (Coverly); to be Vicar, Stone

Christ Church and Outon-w-Moorsdale (Lichfield).
The Rev Gillian King, Chaplain of Kingston District Community NHS Trust (Southwark); to be Team Vicar, Hale Team Ministry, Wexham (Gillingham).
The Rev Robert McTeer, Curate-in-charge, Auckland St Helen; to be Vicar of that parish (Durham).
The Rev Dr Richard Major, Cathedral Curate, Truro Cathedral (Truro); to be Curate-in-charge, St Mary w All Saints, Pinner (Southwark).
The Rev William Matthews, Team Vicar, Hitchin; to be Rector, Tuddington and Chalgrove (St Albans).
The Rev Stephen Miles, diocese of Melbourne, Australia; to be Assistant Curate, St Boniface, Bonn and All Saints, Cologne, Germany (Europe).
The Rev Diana Newman, Curate (NSM), Parkstone St Peter w Branksea and St Osmond Team Ministry; to be Team Vicar (NSM).

of that Team Ministry (Salisbury).
The Rev Andrew Platt, Rector, St John the Baptist, Scornborough; to be Priest-in-charge, All Saints, Sudbury w Ballingdon and Brundon (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich).
The Rev Clive Price, Priest-in-charge, St Oswald in Lee w Binglefield and Diocesan Ecumenical Officer (Newcastle); now also an Honorary Canon of Newcastle Cathedral.
The Rev Hugh Searle, Vicar, Barton, and Rector, Caton (Ely); to be also an Honorary Canon of Ely Cathedral.
The Rev Dr Graham Southgate, Curate, Tibbury Team Ministry; to be Team Vicar, Chalk Valley Team Ministry (Salisbury).
The Rev William Stock, Team Rector, North Shields Team Ministry and Rural Dean of Tyne-mouth (Newcastle); now also an Honorary Canon of Newcastle Cathedral.
The Rev Andrew Todd, Senior Assistant Priest, Derham and

UNEMPLOYED PROCESSION

IN THE WEST END
Organised by the London and District Right to Work Council, a demonstration of wives and children of the unemployed took place yesterday afternoon in the West End. The council provided the railway fares, and the women and children came in large numbers from various parts of London. About 2,000 women, most of them with one or more children, making about 5,000 in all, assembled in Cavendish square, where they formed in procession.

Several banners were carried, one bearing the words "Work or Revolution: Which? The Government must decide", and another "Help the poor who help themselves". The party from Poplar had a banner with the inscription "Poplar women demand work or food; let the rich remember our destitution is the price paid for luxury; think of our 100,000 children who go to school hungry every day". With the party were several members of the Poplar board of guardians.

Shortly after 3 o'clock the procession started for the Horticultural Hall, Westminster, whence it was arranged to send deputations to the House of Commons. Marching six abreast and carrying or leading the children, some of

ON THIS DAY

February 17, 1909

This impressive demonstration was headed by several women prominent in the Votes for Women Movement, among them Mrs Cobden-Sanderson, Mrs Montefiore and Mrs Despard.

whom dropped out through fatigue, the women proceeded by way of Oxford Street, Bond and Victoria to the Horticultural Hall, where they received refreshment.

At Oxford Street a number of men tried to march at the head of the procession but were dispersed by the police, several hundreds of whom were present to keep order. When the procession reached Duke Street a man broke a jeweller's plate glass window with a brickbat and shouted to the crowd, "Come and help yourselves". He was at once arrested, with another man who tried to rescue him. A large number of the public accompanied

the procession, and considerable interest was shown in a car on which was erected a representation of an Englishman's Home — "What there is of it, is it worth defending?"

The procession was headed by a number of prominent women agitators, including Mrs Cobden-Sanderson, Mrs Despard, Miss Leighton, Mrs Montefiore, Mrs Albany, and Mrs Fairchild. As the women passed through Park Lane, the band of the Stepney Gasworkers, which marched at the head of the procession, played the Dead March in *Soul*.

MISS TITA BRAND'S RECITAL

For one person to read *Macbeth* throughout is a Herculean task; and candidly, we do not think Miss Brand was wise to undertake it at her third recital at the Aeolian Hall. Tragedy depends for its impressiveness upon an accumulated effect, a sequence of events from which there is no escape for the chief characters. Such an effect can hardly be obtained by a reading, however, unsparring the efforts of the interpreter. Miss Brand made full use of her commanding presence, stately gestures and histrionic capability, and succeeded in giving a mark of vividness to certain episodes but it was beyond her power to make the various characters live before us.

مجلس من لادخل

NEWS

Tory beef deal bid to buy votes

Douglas Hogg will today announce the first steps towards lifting the beef ban in Northern Ireland in a blatant attempt to enlist support from the Ulster Unionists in tonight's general election.

Ministers denied that any deals were being done. But with all parties claiming a full turnout for the vote on the handling of the BSE crisis, the nine Ulster Unionists, with just one Tory rebel, could determine the government's fate. Page 1

Prowler fear girl, 13, murdered

Police were trying to identify a man with a scarred face who called on at least one house in a street minutes before Billie-Jo Jenkins, 13, was bludgeoned to death in the garden of her home in Hastings, east Sussex. The attack followed worries by her foster family about prowlers near the house. Page 1

Exam failure

A degree examination included a question from a ten-year-old A-level paper, highlighting fears that university standards are falling. Page 1

Spice Girls' success

British balance of trade figures will be rosier next month thanks to the Spice Girls, the pop group which yesterday topped the American charts with *Wannabe*. Page 1

Britons sentenced

Three Britons were among twelve people sentenced in Cairo to jail with hard labour for smuggling Egyptian antiquities out of the country. Experts said the case highlighted the threat from art thieves to Pharaonic treasures despite new security measures. Page 3

Victims beat HIV

Two men who recovered after being infected by the AIDS virus HIV are giving scientists clues that could lead to better treatments for the disease. Page 4

Glorious Chipmunk

The Chipmunk trainer that has served the Army and RAF for 50 years is to leave the Colours this summer after a final trail-blazing flight to America. Page 4

Oxford fees

Oxford is to examine a call by senior dons that it should charge students course fees of up to £8,000. Page 5

Why Quentin Crisp is gay but unhappy

Quentin Crisp, 88, famously known as "the great stately homo of England", has called for babies with a "gay gene" to be aborted because he believes the world would be better without homosexuals. He said he often wished he had never been born and had been unhappy with his sexuality since he was a six-year-old. Page 7

Tommy award

The West End musical *Tommy*, forced to close last month after audiences failed to endorse its rave reviews, has won a Laurence Olivier Award as the most outstanding musical production. Page 7

Tibet pictures

Photographs from a 1935 expedition to the remotest area of eastern Tibet are to be exhibited for the first time. They record the adventures of John Hanbury-Tracy. Page 8

Albania protests

President Berisha of Albania ordered police to allow demonstrations over fraudulent "pyramid" savings schemes. He said many investors had only themselves to blame, but the Government had been naive. Page 9

Global car crime

Car theft, often organised by Russian gangs, is now as big an international problem as drug smuggling, says a survey by a London-based group. Page 10

Zaire private army

Businessmen in Zaire's richest province of Shaba plan to pay their own army to recapture towns lost to rebels. Page 11

Korea shooting

South Korea accused North Korea of trying to kill a long-staying defector to the south as a stand-off continued in Beijing. Page 12



Scramble start: More than 750 motorcyclists begin the 22nd annual Enduro race in the sand at Le Touquet, France, yesterday

BUSINESS

Telecom deal: Downward pressure on the cost of telephone calls is set to continue after a landmark agreement to bring free trade to the world's £375 billion telecommunications market. Page 44

After British Gas: Trading in the shares of Centrica and BG, the two new companies formed from the break-up of British Gas, begins today. Page 44

Oil takeover: Gulf Canada Resources looks set to win its £494 million battle for control of Clyde Petroleum, the British oil and gas company. Page 44

Belfast jobs: The Northern Ireland economy will receive a boost when Shorts, the aircraft builder, is expected to create more than 1,000 jobs in Belfast. Page 44

ARTS

Melvin Bragg writes: "My yoke will be like a relic from a past time, a baton which I can hand on as evidence that this was once the way we lived." Page 16

Opera double: The Welsh National Opera unveils its unconventional new production of *Carmen* at the New Theatre in Cardiff, while Birmingham sees an unmissable staging of *Macbeth*, courtesy of the City of Birmingham Touring Opera. Page 16

Early drama: A staging in London for the Spanish potboiler of pride and intrigue *The Jew of Toledo*, by Lope de Vega. Page 16

Cineaste treats: Geoff Brown surveys the oddballs and the Oscar hopefuls at this year's edition of the Berlin Film Festival. Page 17

FOOTBALL

Is it art? Should the Victoria and Albert Museum stage an exhibition of Pirelli nudes? Jason Cowley reports. Page 14

Strong medicine: In part one of our series on natural ways to maintain good health, Shyam-Singha explains how to maintain your body's balance without resorting to drugs. Page 15

Life in the shadows? The loner, the obsessive, the eternal bachelor, the overprotective mother, the temperamental husband. They are mentally ill, according to *Shadow Syndromes*, a new book. Page 13

Flying danger: A butterfly from South Africa is spreading panic through Spain. Page 13

FOOTBALL

Football: The draw for the FA Cup quarter-finals guaranteed that one club from the Nationwide League second division will appear in the last four of the competition after Chesterfield and Wrexham were drawn against each other. Page 17

Rugby union: England showed definite signs that their new-look team is beginning to grow into a powerful and cohesive force in the 46-6 thrashing of Ireland in Dublin. Page 27

Cricket: Michael Atherton confirmed his return to form by scoring 94 not out and becoming only the seventh Englishman to carry his bat through an innings, in the third Test against New Zealand in Christchurch. Page 25

Tennis: Greg Rusedski, the British No. 2, confirmed the growing authority of his game by beating Andre Agassi in the semi-finals of the Sybase Open in San Jose. Page 24

Football: Matthew Le Tissier should not shoulder the blame for England's World Cup defeat by Italy, says his England colleague, Steve McNamara, in his *Times* column. Page 29

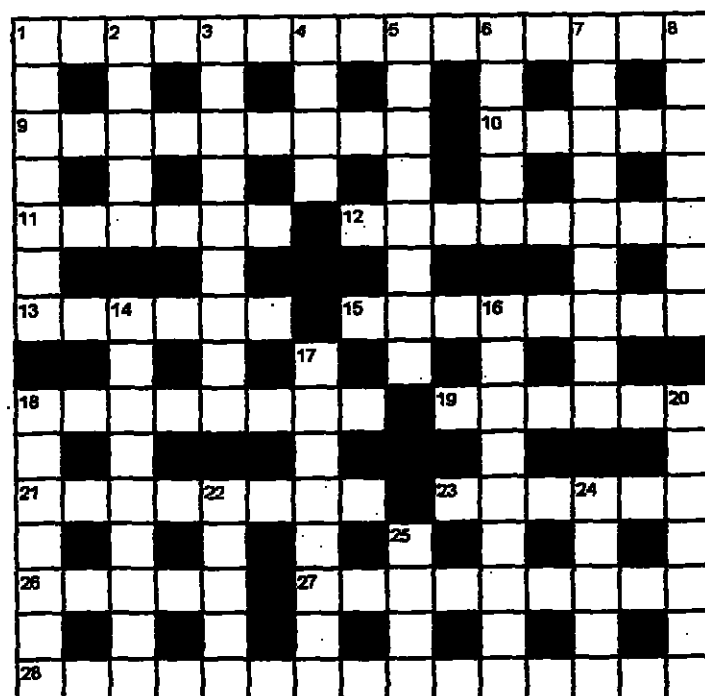
7, 14, 21, 34, 38, 47: Bonus 13. Nineteen winners shared the £315,736 jackpot and each received £427,144. 41 win £50,906, for the numbers and the bonus ball: 2,403 win £549 with five balls; 84,551 win £40 for four and 1,275,960 win £10 for three balls.

IN THE TIMES

■ SECOND OPINION
Bernard Levin casts his critical eye on Kenneth Branagh's big screen *Hamlet*

■ LAW
The lawyers who ask for payments that run to multimillions of dollars

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,405



- ACROSS**
- Keep own appliers of 11, and don't be deflected (5,2,4,4).
 - New ring-leader we invite for formal discussion (9).
 - Group of languages contained in certain dictionaries (5).
 - Smear the name of a republic, say (6).
 - Retain page at front of book (8).
 - Adapt my pole for use as staff (6).
 - Firm policy about member's office (8).
 - Carry about forty bulging outwardly thus (8).
 - Popular instrument, to be sure (6).
 - His piece is accepted after a daughter applies (8).
 - Something absconders do with hesitation? Nonsense (6).
 - Horse initially kept in parent's county (5).
 - Be close to one beggared at the table (9).
- DOWN**
- Return to local branch - with unfavourable repercussions? (4,2,5).
 - Short cut found across the beach (7).
 - Fibre in Germany is superior to the French (5).
 - It could replace broken set, by the way (8).
 - Drop out of old American university (4).
 - Additional opportunity to include second source of information (4,4).
 - Smart husband finally replaced by son is European (5).
 - Emphasise where a sleeper may lie (6).
 - Hide in quarters on island (7).
 - Belief in distribution of a ship-ment (9).
 - Writer a vigorous promoter of animal enclosure? (3-6).
 - A container in the best metal (8).
 - One in excellent condition's first in this race (7).
 - Fault in climbing exhausted about half of them (7).
 - Wood which borders on the sea, say (5).
 - From Tokyo, moving to here? (5).
 - Caledonian tribesman caught in animal trap (4).

The solution of Saturday's Prize Puzzle No 20,404 will appear next Saturday. The five winners will each receive a £20 book token.

Times Two Crossword, page 44

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HIGHEST & LOWEST
Yesterday's highest day temp: Chichester, Dover, 10C (50F); lowest day temp: Lough, 1C (34F).
Today's highest day temp: Chichester, Dover, 10C (50F); lowest day temp: Lough, 1C (34F).
Cals are charged at 45p per minute plus 10p. 50p per minute at all other times.

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 41.2% of the new material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1996

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General: England and Wales

will have a blustery day of showers or longer periods of rain. South-westerly winds will be gale or severe gale force and, although temperatures will be near or a little above normal, it will feel cold.

Scotland and Northern Ireland will be cloudy and wet, with a spell of heavy rain followed by further showers. It will be windy, with gales or severe gales, especially in the exposed west.

London, SE England, E Anglia, Central S England, E Midlands, E England: cloudy with showers or longer periods of rain. Wind southwesterly, strong, locally gale. Max 10C (50F).

W Midlands, Central N England, NE England, Borders: cloudy with showers or longer periods of rain. Wind southwesterly, strong and blustery, gusting to gale force. Max 8C (46F).

Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: cloudy with showers or longer periods of rain. Wind southwesterly, strong to gale, becoming southeasterly. Max 8C (46F).

Outlook for Tuesday and Wednesday: continuing unsettled, windy with rain.

Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales, N Wales, NW England:

cloudy with rain, heavy at times. Wind southwesterly, gale. Max 10C (50F).

Lake District, Isle of Man, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Argyll, NW Scotland, N Ireland: cloudy with rain, heavy at times. Wind southwesterly, gale or severe gale, becoming southerly. Max 8C (46F).

Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: cloudy with showers or longer periods of rain. Wind southwesterly, strong to gale, becoming southeasterly. Max 8C (46F).

Outlook for Tuesday and Wednesday: continuing unsettled, windy with rain.

Sunny

Sunny intervals
Cloudy
Drizzle
Overcast
Rain
Sunny showers
Steady rain
Showers
Lightning
Hail
Snow
Temperature (Celsius)
Wind speed (mph) & direction
Sea conditions

Changes to chart below from noon: low C will drift north then northwest, filling. Low R will sink southeast and fill. Highs A and B will decline, losing their identity

Today's weather conditions for various regions, including London, Birmingham, Manchester, etc.

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Preview: A British Army sergeant who lost a leg in Bosnia is not allowed to claim compensation. *Here and Now* (BBC 1, 7.30pm). Review: Matthew Bond's farewell to a booming Ivano. Page 43

A higher priority

Let the US by all means press the EU to hasten its own enlargement. But if it is serious about a safer Europe, it should put Nato enlargement on hold. Page 19

Ulster arithmetic

The Unionists have, potentially, little to gain and much to lose by precipitating the fall of this Government. Page 19

Sugar and spice

The British music industry has now grown bigger than shipbuilding, electronic components and water supply, with little help from governments that pour money into conventional enterprises. Page 19

WILLIAM REES-MOGG

Lady Blatch believes that the courts ought to take the theft of a bottle of milk as seriously as the theft of a T-bone. She would be hard put to find anyone riding on the top of a bus who would share so ridiculous a conclusion. Page 18

PETER RIDDELL

Labour is not really challenging the Tories' approach to monetary policy, taxes, public spending, competitiveness, the NHS, education and so forth. Page 18

Dorothy Fosdick, American foreign policy expert; **Thomas Snow,** diplomat; **Hans Tisdall,** painter; **Air Marshal Sir Barry Dudeney,** maritime reconnaissance specialist. Page 21

Sir Rodric Braithwaite on Russia's place in an enlarged Nato; **Stephen Lawrence's** murder and "trial by media"; losing our literary heritage. Page 19

If Nato did not exist, someone would have to invent it. In a country where the answer to the question "Who are we allied against?" can unite the multitudes, a common enemy is the most valuable commodity. — *Moskovsky Novosti*

Temperatures at midday local time on Saturday, X = not available

Sky's undertakers lose out in panel game

Been a good week for the Italians, hasn't it? Des Lynam twinkled after Roberto Di Matteo eased Chelsea into the lead at Filbert Street yesterday. Indeed it had, especially if you caught a glimpse of Lazio against Internazionale on Channel 4 yesterday. But it was also a week of mixed fortunes for our broadcasters, with Sky showing once again that, while its cheque book can virtually guarantee top-class sporting action, it still lags miserably behind the BBC when it comes to turning a fixture into an occasion.

Last Wednesday, for instance, a peak audience of four million would have been hard-pressed to criticise Sky's coverage of England against Italy on technical grounds, but when it came to critical content... well, where do we start?

Ray Wilkins, Joe Royle and Bryan Robson sat there like three depressed undertakers. They may have captured the mood of the nation, but it was the sort of television that made you glad to see Jimmy Hill.

John Motson and Trevor Brookling had to settle for second best and recorded highlights for Sportsnight on BBC1, but the post-match analysis from the Euro 96 team of Hill, Hansen and Gullit was excellent. While never losing sight of the need to be critical, it was positive, upbeat and, as far as circumstances would allow, fun. Whether it was enough for Rund Cullin to enjoy a free 15-minute commercial for his own-label leisure-wear, however, is another matter. A less charismatic individual would not have got away with it. Charisma, though, is what



MATTHEW BOND
TV ACTION REPLAY

television sport is increasingly about, a fact that Sky must recognise. On Wednesday, it had a reasonable commentary team (Trevor Francis may have been the right national, but he was a poor substitute for Andy Gray alongside Martin Tyler), and a decent enough presenter in Richard Keys, but once again struggled to field pundits that its viewers might actually be pleased to see.

James Richardson, presenter of *Gazzetta Football Italia*, has charisma, albeit of a

rather unorthodox, Channel 4 variety. Saturday was the big day of his season as he gave British viewers the Italian view (cue opera and supporters celebrating in Rome pizzeria) of the Zola flair that left the Wembley assembly trembling.

Not even these silky smooth verbal skills can guarantee success, however. The problem was that Richardson's special guest was Paul Ince, a player whose television interview technique is almost defiantly limited. Sprawled, with

one leg over the arm of his chair (not a pretty sight), Ince dispatched Richardson's questions with the bare minimum of effort. "Basically, it was a case of who scored the first goal," Thanks heavens for Kenneth Wolstenholme and his extended highlights.

One of the many things that Richardson did not discover from this interview was that Ince would not be playing in Channel 4's live game yesterday afternoon, between Lazio and Internazionale. Never mind, he and Paul Elliott put a brave presentational face on Ince's absence and Peter Brackley and Luther Blissett provided commentary on the weekly game that provides one of the great unsung assets of terrestrial television. Not just very good football, but live very good football. If only we could decide which team to

support. No problem ten minutes later, at least not for the BBC, which had once again picked Chelsea for *Match of the Day* live.

Once Barry Davies had established his support for Matt Le Tissier ("Good to hear Glenn Hoddle admitting he made a mistake in taking Le Tissier off") and Lynam had rather half-heartedly defended the BBC's decision not to show pictures of the crowd trouble ("We wouldn't want to give them the publicity"), it was not a bad afternoon. The teasing of Gullit and his "two moments" theory, which began on Sportsnight, continued as the game ricocheted from end to end. "Chelsea had their two moments in the first half and now Leicester have had theirs in the second," Davies said. "Nice quiet finish, isn't it?" Trevor Brookling observed.

TENNIS

Agassi follows Chang into Rusedski's bag

By Our Sports Staff

GREG RUSEDSKI provided a glowing advertisement for the benefits of self-denial by achieving the most spectacular result of his career in the Sybase Open yesterday. Rusedski, the British No 2, beat Andre Agassi, the former world No 1, 6-3, 6-4 in the semi-finals of the tournament at the San Jose Arena, California.

Rusedski followed up his straight-sets victory over Michael Chang, the world No 2, in the quarter-final with a performance that underlined his determination to add greater variety to his game. His opponent in the final is Pete Sampras, the world No 1. Rusedski said his willingness to devote his Christmas holiday to extra work on his game was beginning to pay dividends. He and Brian Tischer, his coach, had spent 27 days in Los Angeles, working in four-hour sessions, hitting top-spin backhands and service returns.

It was Rusedski's service, pinpoint volleying and low backhand slice that enabled him to break down Agassi. He produced 14 aces and was timed at 139mph. His service is yet to be broken in the tournament.

Rusedski, ranked No 39 in the world, is well aware that victory in the final would

considerably enhance both his ranking and standing in the game. "Nobody could say I'm a fluke if I beat Chang, Agassi and Sampras in a row," he said. "That would establish me as a true threat to anybody."

Despite never having beaten Agassi before, Rusedski broke him in the first set at 3-2 in a ten-stroke rally from the baseline and then broke him at 2-2 in the second with a down-the-line forehand return which was an outright winner.

"I favour myself indoors

Results 32

against anyone," he said. "I rallied well with Andre. He didn't expect my ground game to be so good." Rusedski gave notice of his improvement last month by reaching the final of the Croatia indoor tournament, in which he lost to Goran Ivanisevic.

Agassi, though, remained sceptical about Rusedski's ability to join the game's elite, although he did concede that he has improved his service selection. "It depends on what he's trying to accomplish," Agassi said. "If you beat a guy like Chang and me back-to-back, sure, that is going to do a lot for your confidence. But it

is one thing to win a tournament one week and another to be able to play that well all year."

Chang, however, was more gracious. "Obviously serving is the backbone of Greg's game," he said after his 7-6, 6-4 defeat, "but I'm usually able to beat Greg on his second serves. Today I wasn't able to get many points on his second serves. When faced with a break point, Rusedski saved all three without approaching the net, coming up with two aces and an unreturnable serve."

During his 6-2, 6-3 semi-final win over Todd Martin, Sampras knocked down an official with an ace that cannoned off the head of the centre line, Ken Olson. "That was a first," Sampras said. "I saw a lawsuit coming."

Sampras, the defending champion, began the year by winning the Australian Open. "When you can start off by winning a grand slam, it makes you relax," he said.

□ Jamie Delgado, of Britain, was overpowered 6-3, 6-4 by Denis Van Uffelen, of Belgium, in the final of the LTA Men's satellite tournament at Chigwell yesterday. Van Uffelen, a qualifier, served 20 aces, taking his tally to 92 in the week.



Rusedski's service was timed at 139mph during his decisive win over Agassi

Muster surfaces from mind game to enhance standing



Muster: proved point

FROM ALIX RAMSAY
IN DUBAI

THOMAS MUSTER, the new world No 2 tennis player, proved a point late last night, winning the second hard-court title of his career by beating Goran Ivanisevic 7-5, 7-6 in the final of the Dubai Open.

The last time that Muster appeared here, 12 months ago, his pride was still suffering from the attacks made by Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi, who claimed that he could win matches only on clay and that he had no right to be the world No 1. Last night he proved that

he is a champion on any surface. In 1½ hours he showed to everybody that winning is what he does best and that there is far more to his game and his character than a powerful physique and the ability to run.

It was a matter of tension, nerves and muscle, and for Ivanisevic there were times when it was all too much. In the first set he let four break points slip away, and after the fourth he threw his racket away in disgust, missing a ball boy by inches, and received a code violation for racket abuse.

Five games later he was broken for the first time, despite serving two aces to take his tally to 12, and blew a fuse. He threw his racket high into the air towards the crowd, stormed back to his seat and kicked his bottle of water away. That earned him a further code violation for unsportsmanlike conduct and a point penalty.

With the first set gone and the temper tantrums done with, Ivanisevic and Muster settled down to a battle of power and nerve. Ivanisevic has never been the subtlest of players — serve hard and

whenever you see the ball belt it good and hard — but, against Muster, who will run until he drops to retrieve the most impossible of lost causes, the result was bound to come down to a couple of points and a little luck.

Ivanisevic kept pace with Muster stroke for stroke from the baseline as the second set progressed, producing his best tennis of the week. The aces came when he needed them, but the luck was missing. Twice he had a set point on Muster's service to level the scores, but twice the net-cord robbed him of his chance. As

the players scrambled across the baseline forcing every point and hitting the ball harder and harder, they were forced into a tie-break.

Neither was prepared to concede an inch and Ivanisevic, who has a habit of falling apart under such pressure, passed the test of character with flying colours. Unfortunately for him, though, Muster proved the stronger. Falling 3-0 behind and ending up flat on his back as he raced to scramble back yet another Muster-forehand, it was all over bar the shouting.

Hingis makes it four out of four

MARTINA HINGIS maintained her unbeaten record this year by winning the final of the women's Paris Open yesterday. Hingis, 16, beat Anke Huber, of Germany, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 to win her fourth tournament in succession. The Swiss, who rose to No 2 in the world after winning the Australian Open last month, took less than half an hour to win the first set, but conceded the second when she found trouble holding her service. Huber then struggled with her service in the decisive third set and although Hingis needed a slice of luck to move to match point, courtesy of a favourable net-cord, she finished the match with aplomb.

Thomas Enqvist, of Sweden, won the men's tournament in Marseille yesterday when his opponent Marcelo Rios, of Chile, retired early in the second set. Rios, the No 1 seed, pulled a muscle in his left leg during his semi-final match against Sergi Bruguera, of Spain, on Saturday and finally gave into the injury at 6-4 and 1-0 down to Enqvist.

Marshall fights back

SQUASH: Peter Marshall continued his attempt to return to the top of the sport after nearly two years out of the game with chronic fatigue syndrome with victories over Paul Johnson, the Kent No 1, and David Campion, the Yorkshire No 1, in the National Squash Federation inter-county finals at the Howdon club in Beckenham, Kent. The former world No 2 changed county registration from Leicestershire to Nottinghamshire this year and led his new colleagues into their first inter-county final by defeating Kent 3-2 on Saturday. However, Campion's lower order for Yorkshire, the defending champions, was too strong for Nottinghamshire yesterday and they took the final 4-1.

Sorenstam's bright day

GOLF: Annika Sorenstam, aiming for her second tournament win of the year, shot a three-under-par 69 to open a three-stroke lead at the end of the second round of the Los Angeles women's championship. Sorenstam, of Sweden, finished her round as darkness fell, making it difficult to gauge distances from the fairway and the break on the greens. However, she still managed to par the final five holes and was nine under at 135 after two rounds of the three-day event. Ellie Gibson, without a win in her seven years on the LPGA Tour, was second on 138 after a 69.

Christie powers home

ATHLETICS: Linford Christie won the 100 metres at the Hobart Grand Prix meeting yesterday in a time of 10.30sec. Christie, 36, powered home to defeat Steve Brimacombe, of Australia, who recorded 10.45sec. Patrick Stevens, of Belgium, and Gus Nketia, from New Zealand, finished in a dead heat for third in 10.48sec. Keith Cullen, of Britain, finished second in the Chiba international cross-country race in Japan. The race was won by Mathias Ntawulikura, of Rwanda, in 35min 50sec over the 12-kilometre course. Cullen finished in 36min 12sec.

Britons miss bronze

HOCKEY: Old Loughonians had to settle for fourth place in the European indoor club championship in Cologne yesterday, losing 11-4 in the play-off for bronze. Slagelse, the Danish champions, won their country's first European club medal by comprehensively beating the Old Boys. The Essex side missed out on a penalty corner in the opening minute, and never recovered from a second-minute penalty stroke against them. Insights Menzies Hill won the bronze medal at the B division event in Budapest yesterday.

Fraction beats Jackson

ATHLETICS: Colin Jackson, of Wales, was beaten by the closest of margins by Allen Johnson, of the United States, in the 60 metres hurdles in Lievin, France, yesterday. The Olympic high hurdles champion was declared the winner after both athletes finished in 7.53sec. The pair, who are heading for a showdown in the world indoor championships in Paris next month, both thought they had won after crossing the line together. Jackson set a time of 7.46sec in Stuttgart last month in an encouraging return to form.

Deakin retains title

CURLING: Martyn Deakin's Wigan and Haig team held off a challenge from the English junior squad, led by Mark Copperhead, to retain the English curling title at Berth. With both teams winning three out of four round robin matches, the decision went to a play-off where Deakin beat Copperhead's rink 7-2. Joan Reed, from Berwick, won the women's title for the fifth time.

Lynch rescues leaders

LACROSSE: Cheadle, the premier division leaders, dropped their first point of the season when Hulmeans held them to a 9-9 draw at Sale on Saturday. Cheadle are still unbeaten after 15 league games, but Hulmeans, who led 9-5 at one stage, nearly destroyed their record. Cheadle were rescued by Phil Lynch, who scored four goals in the dying minutes.

MOTOR RACING

Williams silent on 'debris'

By Oliver Holt

THE Williams Formula One team last night refused to say whether they would use a photograph published in *The Sunday Times* yesterday as evidence in the defence of three of their top officials who are accused of the manslaughter of the late, three times world champion, Ayrton Senna.

The picture, taken by the French motor racing photographer, Paul-Henri Cahier, and never before published, shows a fragment of debris apparently lying in the path of Senna's Williams-Renault shortly before it crashed at the Tamborello corner during the 1994 San Marino Grand Prix, killing the Brazilian driver.

It is possible that Senna ran over the debris, which appears by its colour to have become detached from the Benetton driven by JJ Lehto after the Finn was involved in a start-line accident with the Lotus of Pedro Lamy. The Brazilian may have damaged a tyre in the process or swerved to avoid it and lost control over the bumps in the turn into the corner as a result.

A second picture, taken after Senna had passed the debris, is said to show that the position of the fragment on the track had moved, suggesting that there was some form of contact. But the evidence is so circumstantial that it is unlikely to have much bearing on the trial of Frank Williams, the Williams team owner, Patrick Head, the technical director, Adrian Newey, the car's designer, and three race officials, which begins in Imola on Thursday.

If anything, it may strengthen the Williams case slightly but neither the picture, nor the outlandish theory put forward in the same article that Senna might have blacked out because he had been holding his breath, is likely to provoke as much debate as the assertion of the prosecution that the steering column on Senna's car snapped as he tried to negotiate the bend at more than 190mph. He died of massive head injuries.

At the Williams annual season lunch for the British press last week, Head hinted that their defence team had

compelling evidence to refute the theory about the steering column and that he and his co-accused would contest the charges vigorously.

"It is a serious engineering charge," Head said, "and it is not the sort of thing I want on my record. It has not been easy coping with it and the only way I manage it is to compartmentalise things in my mind."

If Williams lose the case, an outcome that is thought unlikely, they will appeal and the process could drag on for more than a decade. A guilty verdict would also bring the future of motor racing in Italy into doubt, even though Max Mosley, the president of the International Motor Sport Federation (FIA), has initiated attempts to formulate a dangerous sports law that would protect teams and officials in any similar incident.

□ Jan Magnussen, 23, the Danish driver of the Stewart-Ford team, suffered a minor leg injury needing six stitches when he crashed during testing at the Estoril circuit in Portugal on Saturday.

SKIING

Bronze medal helps to salvage Tomba's pride

ALBERTO TOMBA salvaged some of his reputation on the final day of the Alpine skiing world championships in Sestriere by recovering to earn a bronze in the slalom on the final day of the event.

While Deborah Compagnoni, Tomba's Italian compatriot, was hailed as the undisputed queen of the slopes with gold medals in the slalom and giant slalom, Tomba struggled under the weight of expectation from his home crowd.

He was always going to find it difficult to reproduce his double gold medal-winning performance at the championships in Sierra Nevada last year after a season dogged by a combination of injury and illness.

He withdrew from the first leg of the giant slalom last Wednesday and looked as if he was heading for the loss of face that he had dreaded. However, he fought off the effects of an illness that had looked likely to force his withdrawal, to take the bronze behind Tom Stansen, of Norway, who won the gold medal,

and Sebastien Amiez, of France, who took silver. "It was a very important medal," Tomba said.

He and Kristina Ghedina, in the downhill, who also won bronze, were the only Italian men to win medals in Sestriere. The women did the rest with three golds and a silver. Only the Norwegians, with three men's golds and three silvers, finished above the host nation in the final table. Pernilla Wiberg, of Sweden, the overall World Cup leader, also left it to the last day to take her medal. She won a downhill bronze, but was delighted with what was her first medal in a speed discipline.

Hilary Lindh, of the United States, shared the headlines on the final day by winning the women's downhill title. The result represented a remarkable comeback by Lindh, who won bronze last year, after she contemplated retirement earlier in the season.

Results, page 32

GOLF

Price storms to victory

By Our Sports Staff

Price had completed nine unimpressive holes in the regulation 36.

When play resumed after the storm, he birdied three of the next five holes to reinforce his position.

He said: "When they asked us on 17 if we wanted to carry on playing because it was getting dark, I ran from the tee to my ball."

"I was just really happy we finished today, even though on my last putt I couldn't really see."

In spite of Price's poor

performance on the front nine, none of his rivals were able to take advantage. Frost, who started the day on 11 under, had an eventful round liberally sprinkled with birdies and bogeys.

The South African also seemed to be inspired by the lightning and recorded birdies on the 10th, 12th, and 14th holes, but then promptly bogeyed the 15th and 16th.

Thomas Bjorn, of Denmark, was also unable to capitalise on Price's early slump. Three birdies and three bogeys saw him finish third on 27.

Padraig Harrington, of Ireland, who started the final round on his own in second position, on 12-under, struggled to a three-over-par 75, which included bogeys on the final two holes.

Harrington finished on 279, sharing fourth position with Ronnie McCann, of the United States, Stephen Ames, of Trinidad and Tobago, Wayne Westner, of South Africa, and Mark McNulty, of Zimbabwe. It was Price's first tournament victory since the Zimbabwe Open in December 1995.

Lonard takes play-off

PETER LONARD capped one of golf's remarkable comebacks with a gripping play-off victory over Peter O'Malley in the Australian Masters at Huntingdale in Melbourne on Sunday.

Lonard, 29, beat his fellow New South Welshman, Peter O'Malley, on the second extra hole of a play-off to capture his first professional victory after both had finished the 72 regulation holes locked on

276, 16 under. Lonard and O'Malley, who won the 1995 Benson and Hedges International, both parred the first play-off hole, the 18th. At the second, the par-four 17th, both players missed the green, with O'Malley far to the right. His chip finished about 2½ metres from the hole, while Lonard's was 1½ metres away.

O'Malley pulled his putt and it slid by, but Lonard made no mistake.

New Zealand's second-innings collapse leaves final Test delicately balanced

Spin bowlers restore England's hopes

FROM ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT
IN CHRISTCHURCH

CHRISTCHURCH (third day of five): New Zealand, with four second-innings wickets standing, lead England by 213 runs

CRICKET has never depended exclusively on quality for its drama and two indifferent teams have injected the dying days of this series with acrimony, uncertainty and no little excitement. The standard of the game may have been largely undistinguished but the final Test has lacked nothing in incident.

Yesterday began with Michael Atherton, once more cast as a hero in adversity, becoming only the seventh Englishman to carry his bat through a Test innings. It ended with one New Zealander refusing to walk on being given out and another batting with a broken hand as their control of the match was eroded by England's spin bowlers.

The confrontational tone of the contest was set long before Bryan Young declined to acknowledge that a catch at silly point by Nick Knight had been taken cleanly and that the umpire, Darrell Hair, had raised his finger. Young stood his ground until Hair, betraying doubt, walked across to square leg, consulted with his colleague, Steve Durren, and confirmed the decision. It seemed, at the time, a blatant transgression of the code of conduct, though some of the behaviour that preceded it was scarcely more attractive.

Here, as in Wellington last week, there has been a simmering hostility between the sides, a sense of straining for excessive aggression to compensate for limited ability. Some of the words exchanged, notably between Dominic Cork and Adam Parore, were cheap and childish of nature. By last night, the involvement of the match referee was inevitable.

With that said, New Zealand, their stock subterranean as the game approached, have rallied with spirit. Whatever the result, they have given England a fright, one they plainly needed. As so often in the wake of a win, England's cricket submitted to complacency, with potential consequences paradoxically direct for the man who did most to deliver them from the mess.

To state that Atherton thrives in such situations has become a cliché of the game. He has risen to daunting challenges so frequently now that it seems his technique is refined under duress, his hunger sharpened by the adrenaline of danger. He was six runs away from his first century of a personally unproductive



Atherton stands alone, awaiting the arrival of yet another partner during his defiant unbeaten innings of 94. Photograph: Graham Chadwick / Allsport

winter, and still batting with an untroubled calm, when the last of his inadequate partners departed.

Defeat here would affect no one more harshly than Atherton. Only days ago, he was apparently being endorsed for another summer as captain but to lose with ignominy at the end of a series that has otherwise been dominated by his team would be a severe blow for his stature and support. Having invited trouble by putting in New Zealand, then watched his fast bowlers compound the error by pitching dim-wittedly short, he could hardly have done more to prevent it.

Last night, Atherton was restrained in his criticisms of England's cricket over the first two days. "The pitch didn't do a right lot," he offered by way of defence for his toss decision. "We bowled a bit short early on," he conceded of his erratic

attack. And the batting? "A little bit indiscipline... but we have got another chance to put that right."

Discipline, in fact, was absent from the England innings, virtually whenever Atherton himself was not on strike. From the moment on Saturday afternoon when Knight fell in a frenetic style now worryingly familiar, to the crazy interlude after lunch yesterday when Philip Tufnell, the No 11, scampered last-ball singles as if intent on farming the strike from a captain six hours into his act, this was frail, characterless batting.

Alec Stewart played as if he felt indestructible. Nasser Hussain and John Crawley were both guilty of careless driving. Graham Thorpe played on to a change bowler recently derided by the England coach. Then, perhaps most reprehensible of all, Cork played a hot-headed,

ROLL OF HONOUR

England players who have carried their bat	Score	Total
R A Abel	130	307
P P Warner	120	327
L Hutton	100	344
G Boycott	90	272
G A Gooch	80	215
A J Stewart	60	156
M A Atherton	94	228

poorly executed pull to the fifth ball of the morning yesterday and was caught behind.

Minutes earlier, Cork had been telling viewers of Sky Television that he intended to get his head down and support his captain. He obviously has a short memory. "It happens," Atherton shrugged later. But in such circumstances, it should not happen.

Cork's aberration left England 145 for six, an intimidating distance short of a New Zealand total to which they

had generously donated. Defiance of great resolution was required and, for 85 minutes, Atherton found stoical support from Robert Croft.

This has been a fine game for Croft and his batting exhibited all the virtues that his supposed betters had ignored. His shot selection was sound and he offered the full face of the bat to everything. Only his dismissal, after a stand worth 53, was laughable as a slow, high full toss from Astle was spooned to mid-on. Atherton was now unable to

keep the strike as Darren Gough and Andy Caddick fell cheaply and Tufnell played his cameo, full of confidence if short on tactical sense. When it was over, Atherton was left as the first Englishman since Stewart against Pakistan, at Lord's five years ago, to bat through a Test innings. I wonder if he felt much satisfaction.

The plain fact is that New Zealand had outbowed England, as well as outbatted them. A lead of 118, with more than half the playing hours to come, was an enviable advantage but Atherton's captaincy was now reflected in his oratory as well as his example. "I told them to remember Port Elizabeth last year, when we were 160 behind and then had South Africa 60 for six," he said. It was a speech of startling effect.

Cork struck with his fourth ball, Pocock unsure whether to

play a stroke or not and making a nonsense of the compromise. New Zealand would have been nought for two if Knight had clung on to a one-handed slip chance offered by Young off Caddick but Parore, restored to No 3, made little headway before falling to Gough in the final over before tea.

The final session was England's best of the match. Croft and Tufnell operated together, probing and pressuring, and New Zealand reacted nervily. Their position gradually collapsed as four close catches were taken, three of them by Knight. By the close, the spinners had shared 38 overs and taken four wickets for 49 and Matt Horne was winning with pain at every defensive push. The game was in the balance, which is perhaps more than England could have expected a few hours earlier.

Young walks out of trouble

BRYAN YOUNG, the New Zealand opening batsman, escaped without punishment at Lancaster Park yesterday after committing one of the fundamental sins of cricket by refusing to leave the field on being given out (Alan Lee writes).

This lenient treatment was announced, after a disciplinary hearing, by the match referee, Peter Burge, the same man who heavily fined Michael Atherton, the England captain, at the Oval in 1994 when his alleged dissent extended to shaking his head and looking at his bat after being adjudged leg-before.

The incident occurred late on the third day of the final Test as England, having conceded a first-innings lead of 118, recovered ground rapidly.

Young was fifth out, one short of his half-century, but he plainly disputed the legality of Nick Knight's catch at silly point off the bowling of Phil Tufnell.

Knight plunged low to scoop up the chance off bat and pad and the Australian umpire, Darrell Hair, immediately upheld the appeal. Young, however, simply stood and shook his head, believing that the catch had been taken on the half-volley. Television replays showed him saying: "He didn't catch that. No way."

"When it was clear Young had no intention of walking, Hair compromised his own position by consulting with his square-leg colleague, Steve Durren, before raising his finger again. This time, Young marched off without hesita-

tion, but he must have known he was walking into trouble.

Burge called a hearing after receiving Hair's report, but two hours later, issued a statement exonerating Young, who had offered the explanation that he did not see the finger raised. "Given his unblemished record," Burge reported, "I have decided to take no further action."

Atherton, on whom the irony of the decision will have been lost, partially supported Young's defence by saying that, from his fielding position at mid-wicket, he also had been unaware of the decision had been given. Opinions differed on the catch itself, with Steve Rixon, the New Zealand coach, saying: "I am very disappointed with the decision."

THIRD DAY SCOREBOARD FROM CHRISTCHURCH

NEW ZEALAND: First Innings	
B A Young b Cork	11 (30m, 11 balls, 2 fours)
B A Pocock b Atherton b Croft	22 (36m, 25 balls, 1 four)
M J Horne b Gough	42 (120m, 124 balls, 4 fours)
*S P Fleming b Stewart b Croft	62 (120m, 167 balls, 6 fours)
N J Astle b Hussain b Croft	15 (37m, 23 balls, 1 four)
A C Parore b Hussain b Croft	59 (120m, 167 balls, 1 six, 4 fours)
C L Cairns b Stewart b Croft	57 (150m, 136 balls, 1 six, 4 fours)
S B Doull run out (Tufnell)	1 (17m, 5 balls)
D L Vettori run out (Thorpe/Stewart)	25 (72m, 58 balls, 2 fours)
H T Davies b Hussain b Croft	8 (27m, 31 balls)
G I Allet not out	8 (14m, 18 balls, 1 four)
Extras (b 1, lb 16, nb 10)	27
Total (120.1 overs, 522m)	346
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-14 (Pocock 11, 4.17; Fleming 25, 5.20; Horne 22, 6.25; Cairns 40, 7.28; Young 11, 8.31; Vettori 7, 8.57; Davies 8)	
BOWLING: Cork 20-78-1 (nb 14; 7 overs, 6-1-33-1, 6-2-20-0, 3-0-14-0, 5-0-11-0; Caddick 20-8-64-1 (nb 2; 4 overs, 5-2-3-0, 5-2-3-0, 3-0-3-0, 2-0-3-0)	

England: First Innings	
B A Young b Cork	11 (30m, 11 balls, 2 fours)
B A Pocock b Atherton b Croft	22 (36m, 25 balls, 1 four)
M J Horne b Gough	42 (120m, 124 balls, 4 fours)
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England: Second Innings	
B A Young b Cork	11 (30m, 11 balls, 2 fours)
B A Pocock b Atherton b Croft	22 (36m, 25 balls, 1 four)
M J Horne b Gough	42 (120m, 124 balls, 4 fours)
*S P Fleming b Stewart b Croft	62 (120m, 167 balls, 6 fours)
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England: Third Innings	
B A Young b Cork	11 (30m, 11 balls, 2 fours)
B A Pocock b Atherton b Croft	22 (36m, 25 balls, 1 four)
M J Horne b Gough	42 (120m, 124 balls, 4 fours)
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Scoreboard, page 32



Taylor: 85 in first innings

Officials warn Smith to comply with regulations on drugs testing



Eyes of the world are upon Smith as she raises her arms after winning another title in Atlanta

Michelle Smith, the Irish swimmer who won three Olympic titles and a bronze medal in Atlanta last summer, has been warned by Fina, the international governing body, that she is one infringement away from possible sanction, including suspension from the sport.

The move comes six months after Smith's phenomenal progress became the talking point of the Games, provoking questions about drugs. Smith, then 26, strenuously denied she had ever taken banned substances, putting her success down to hard work.

The warning from Fina follows Smith's failure to make herself available for a drugs test on October 13 last year. It is the latest in a series of communications to the Irish Amateur Swimming Association (IASA) from Fina expressing concern over difficulties testers have had when

trying to contact Smith out of competition.

Fina rules brought in at the Atlanta Olympic Games are clear: if a swimmer fails to appear for out-of-competition testing twice, the national federation will be made aware. If the swimmer cannot be located on one further occasion, they could be considered to "have refused to submit to doping control". The penalty, a four-year suspension from the sport, is the same as for those who test positive for anabolic steroids.

Fina documents obtained by The Times show that testers from International Doping Tests and Management (IDTM), arrived unannounced at Smith's residence in Celbridge, Co Kildare, at 3.30pm on October 13. All top 50 swimmers in the world must supply details of their daily movements to their federation.

However, IDTM's report to Fina states: "Michelle has

Craig Lord says the Irish swimmer may be one infringement from suspension

not returned from the USA. She did not return until October 15." The no-show is in clear contravention of Fina rules. On January 16, Fina wrote to the IASA noting its rules and attaching the IDTM report form for "an unavailable athlete". Fina stated that "regarding Michelle Smith" the IASA should note that "in order to prevent any sanction in the future, it is important that each swimmer be responsible for informing his/her federation of his/her schedule and that the information is forwarded to Fina in time".

The drive to increase out-of-competition testing followed events in 1994, when seven Chinese swimmers tested positive for anabolic steroids out of competition. Fina's letter of last month

refers to an earlier one sent to the IASA on September 13, 1996, expressing concern with Smith's address form, which requests precise details of where swimmers can be found on any given day. "The information is rather vague and on the second page, the daily calendar is not filled out," Fina says.

A year before the latest warning, on January 17, 1996, Fina had informed the IASA that Fina/IDTM had "tried to contact in the first three quarters of 1995, at the address provided, the following swimmer and unfortunately, she was unavailable: Ms Michelle Smith".

In that letter, Fina gives warning that on "future unsuccessful attempts to collect samples from swimmers at locations where they were

reported to be found, the swimmer may be sanctioned". At the time, that provided for a suspension of up to two years.

It was in 1995 that Smith made her big breakthrough, winning the 200 metres butterfly, 200 metres medley and finishing runner-up in the 400 metres medley at the European championships in Vienna. She was accompanied in Austria by her coach since 1993 and the man she would marry, Erik de Bruin, former Dutch shot and latest champion who was suspended from athletics for four years in August 1993 after a drug test revealed an elevated level of testosterone and human chorionic gonadotropin, a banned substance.

De Bruin now faces a ban from swimming because of an incident that took place in Vienna. He accompanied Smith to doping control as her representative. He said, however, that he had lost his

credentials and gave testers a false name, according to Hann Beyer, a member of Fina and the European Swimming League, who now heads the Fina Doping Commission set up in Atlanta to judge doping cases.

Beyer has said that the League would "not be ready to give him any credentials any more without clarifying what happened in Vienna." The statement has particular importance as the European championships take place in Seville, Spain, in August.

Smith has always maintained that she is against the use of drugs. Since 1994, she has faced questions about de Bruin and her vast progress. In 1995, she set an Irish record over 400 metres free-style of 4min 26.18sec, a time that did not rank her among the world's top 150. Fifteen months later, she clocked 4min 07.25sec for victory in Atlanta at the age of 26. The sport had seen nothing like it.

RUGBY UNION: EVEN VICTORIOUS FRENCH ADMIT THAT THE VISITORS WERE THE MORE CONVINCING TEAM AT PARC DES PRINCES

Wales despair at the cruel hand dealt by the fates

France 27
Wales 22FROM GERALD DAVIES
IN PARIS

WALESS ardent and faithful supporters, of whom there were a great many spilling over the Parisian pavements on Saturday, are left to wonder what their team must do to win. Score more points than the opposition is manifestly and inescapably the answer. But try to convince them that there is not a malign influence at work that ensures that the nebulous quality called the rub of the green, which they so generously enjoyed at Murrayfield, is now conspiring, unforgivingly, against them. "We had too much against Scotland," Neil Jenkins, the recipient of this influence, said, "for sure, we haven't had any since then."

If Eric Elwood's garrulousness, with the help of the Arms Park woodwork and which Wales's full back failed to take cleanly, helped to cause Wales's downfall against Ireland, then a cruel high and hesitant bounce caused the feeling of helpless dismay on Saturday.

Aucagne's failed attempt at a dropped goal in the 24th minute of the second half bounced beneath Wales's posts. The vertical bounce discomposed Jenkins. He and Gareth Thomas attempted to readjust their positions but were too late before Llamas latched on to the awkward rolling ball to pass to Llamas to score his second and France's fourth try.

This was at a time when the visitors, having much the better of the match's other spoils, were attempting to close a ten-point gap which had opened up in the second minute of the first half's injury time. Bateman's try and Jenkins's conversion had closed it to three by the eleventh minute of the second half. Then the demons struck to restore the ten-point margin once more and even though Wales created a beautiful score for Howley, the deficit proved too much.

France themselves admitted that Wales were the more convincing team. There is no exaggeration in saying that this was Wales's most consummate performance for a decade and more. For once at Parc des Princes they performed as equals to the French and looked and played as though they were capable of winning. They were well worthy of breaking France's defence of an undefeated 22-year period of success. The brutal

FIVE NATIONS



Championship

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England	2	2	0	0	87	19	4
France	2	2	0	0	59	37	4
Wales	3	1	0	2	81	72	2
Ireland	3	1	0	2	47	103	2
Scotland	2	0	0	3	32	75	0

RESULTS: Ireland 15 France 32; Scotland 19 Wales 24; England 41 Scotland 13; Wales 25 Ireland 26; France 27 Wales 22; Ireland 5 England 46.

MATCHES TO COME: March 1: England v France; Scotland v Ireland; March 15: France v Scotland; Wales v England.

scoreboard is not quite so generous: nor does it indicate what a fine and fast game this was.

It could be argued that France's six changes for this match upset their rhythm. It is a point. France's forced changes during the match might have assisted Wales too. Bringing on David Aucagne for Richard Dourthe served only to restore Llamas to centre, his club position. More pertinent perhaps was Miorin's departure from the second row. The visitors won the lineout 11-3 after the interval.

But Llewellyn and Rowley had already begun to assert their authority by that stage so that the whole team were growing in stature. France could only play in fits and starts. But, with Sadoury in threatening form around the manoeuvrings of Glas and Llamas, they capitalised more on their chances than did Wales. If France played to the wickets, then so also did Wales, who could not, on this occasion, be considered second best in this style.

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Howley: fine try

The visitors must have felt much as Ireland had done at Cardiff Arms Park when they, too, went behind after an early score. A powerful opening salvo saw the broad shoulders of Olivier Merle carry a trio of Welsh players over for the first try. Wales's response was similar to that of Ireland. By the end of the first quarter they were in the lead with a try superbly created from the back row for the benefit of Gareth Thomas. Jenkins's conversion and penalty accounted for the other points.

Quinnell, Howley and Bateman drew special praise from Pierre Villepreux, the France assistant coach, who always likes to see players comfortable with the ball in their hands and looking for spaces. Bateman's classical breaks were worthy of a master-class label. Jo Maso, the former France centre, thought Arwel Thomas has a bright future. Both Frenchmen are of an adventurous nature. They are well worth listening to.

For all Wales's efforts, and the territory did largely belong to them, three scores in seven minutes towards the end of the first half undid all their good work. Aucagne chipped behind the slow-turning Gareth Thomas to give Llamas his first try. Wales's failure at the restart gave France the ball from which Llamas sprinted away to send Venditt for his fourth try of the championship. With Aucagne's penalty, Wales's 10-7 lead was reversed to 20-10 in this short space of time.

Still the visitors forced the pace of the match, with Bateman taking an inside pass from Evans for a try which Jenkins converted. They took the game firmly to the French, who began to play desperately and looked bedraggled. Then the fates struck to extend France's lead to which Howley's try merely confirmed what might have been for Wales.

SCORES: France: Tries: Llamas (2), Merle, Venditt. Conversions: Dourthe, Aucagne. Penalty goal: Aucagne. Wales: Tries: G. Thomas, Howley. Conversions: Jenkins (2). Penalty goal: Jenkins.

FRANCE: JJ. Sadoury (Colonel), L. Llamas (Bourbon), R. Dourthe (Dax), S. Glas (Bordeaux), D. Venditt (Bordeaux), P. Carmona (Bordeaux), J. Maso (Agen), J. Jordens (Toulouse), A. Barreix (Agen), C. Llamas (Toulouse), O. Merle (Montpellier), R. Castel (Bordeaux), F. Palous (Dax), Dourthe replaced by D. Aucagne (Dax), G. Llamas replaced by O. Merle (Dax, 54).

WALESS: N. Jenkins (Pontypridd), I. C. Evans (Llanelli), A. G. Swann (Llanelli), S. Glas (Swansea), G. Thomas (Swansea), R. Howley (Cardiff), C. O. Llewellyn (Cardiff), M. Hargreaves (Cardiff), D. Young (Cardiff), S. M. Williams (Neath), M. Rowley (Pontypridd), G. O. Llewellyn (Cardiff), L. Charles (Swansea), L. S. Culbert (Cardiff), Evans replaced by J. Davies (Cardiff, 54), Howley replaced by P. Marshall (Aberystwyth).



Dourthe, the French centre, bursts through the challenge of Charvis, the Wales flanker. Dourthe later went off with a dislocated shoulder

Impromptu choir hits optimistic note

A small group of Welsh people sang lustily on the *Métro* in Paris on Saturday evening. Having left Parc des Princes, they got on at Porte de St Cloud and began serenading a sparsely-occupied carriage.

Why were they singing? Wales has just been beaten 27-22, by four tries to three. That was hardly just cause for men with red caps on their heads and red scarves around their necks to exercise their vocal cords. Maybe they were singing in anticipation of what promises to be a cracker of a game, England against France at Twickenham, when two unbeaten teams will play the match that may decide the grand slam.

The choral society was Welsh, however, and for once they were not singing to drown their sorrows. "Vive le Pays de Galles," they said as they alighted from the *Métro* at Miromesnil. Long live Wales indeed, because even Frenchmen admitted in bars and cafés in Paris on Saturday night that their team had been fortunate to win.

These are heady days in the

five nations' championship as the countries struggle to alter their styles of play. Wales have only one victory from three games but have scored ten tries. France have scored eight in their two victories while England have notched up 87 points in two games. European teams are at last beginning to play the spectator-friendly rugby the southern hemisphere countries have favoured for years.

"The way we won was by running rugby," Pierre Villepreux, who is described as an *entraîneur-adjoint* of the French team, said. "It is important to run at the beginning of a game. Mistakes will happen if you try to run the ball but that is the way we want to play. It is very good for the game. We will play exactly the same way against England except we will make less mistakes and score more tries and more points."

Still, it takes two to play rugby and Wales matched France break for break. "We are aspiring to that type of game," Kevin Bowring, the Wales coach, said. "We are trying for an increased tempo,

JOHN HOPKINS



At Parc des Princes

to keep the ball in play. If this is how the southern hemisphere play, then fine. There has been a change in our attitude to running the ball and scoring tries. Wales are close to producing quality winning rugby."

This is the time for Wales's selectors to stand firm. Their team is good, though not so good that a stronger front five would not be welcome. From Howley at scrum half out to

Ieuan Evans, their backs are strike runners who appear capable of opening most defences. Howley matures from game to game, as does Arwel Thomas. Scott Gibbs and Allan Bateman looked devastating. Bateman cut lines of attack in his thrusting, bulldozing runs that are more unusual and more successful than any other centre playing in the championship. Again and again, he attacked the French at different angles and again and again he caused havoc. There is always an if only and the if only about this team is: if only Thomas on the left wing had an extra yard of pace.

Neil Jenkins now looks comfortable in his role as an international full back, whereas at stand-off he sometimes appeared ponderous. He has been unfortunate in his past two internationals that soft tries have resulted from moves in which he has been involved. First Ireland, and then France, have been given seven points by the bounce of a ball. "I have learnt not to worry," Jenkins said. "Full back is a difficult position to

get used to but I am learning quickly. I am getting on with it."

All this makes Wales against England in Cardiff in a month an exciting prospect. Just as Wasps, Sale, Saracens and Harlequins have broken the duopoly of Bath and Leicester in the Courage Clubs Championship, so it is essential that at least one of the Celtic countries offers a sustained alternative to England or France for the championship. European rugby is never strong enough if the Celtic countries are weak.

Wales are within a dragon's heartbeat of producing a decent team, one capable of making Wales a rugby nation to respect and not to pity. A strong performance in the 1997 World Cup no longer seems a pipedream. Indeed, Villepreux hinted at this in his halting English. "If they choose to continue this rugby then in a few years they will be difficult to beat." Then, in fact, Wales supporters may really have something to sing about.

Exeter prevail as old traditions die hard

Exeter 26
Leeds 25

BY BARNEY SPENDER

IF ANYONE needed proof that rugby life still exists in this increasingly professional age outside the rarefied atmosphere of the Courage Clubs Championship first division and the second division wannabes, then they should have been at Exeter on Saturday.

This was a cracking third division game which saw the lead change five times in the second half before Andy Green's last-minute penalty snatched a win for the home side. Then there was time for a pie and a pint. Just like the old days when rugby was an amateur game.

Not that either side has been caught in a time warp of amateurism. Both have adopted a professional attitude and, with Morley, are looked in a tight battle to see who will join likely champions, Fylde, in the second division next season.

Exeter owed their victory to a storming performance from their back row of Dixon, Batchelor and Armstrong who not only carried the ball and

created space for the runners, but denied Colin Stephens, the former Wales stand-off, time to conduct affairs for Leeds.

Exeter took the lead with the first of Green's four penalties in the second minute and extended it when Batchelor's drive was finished off by Woodman on the right wing. Leeds came back strongly and were level midway through the half thanks to Ainscough's kicking and a try from Griffin. And by half-time they had moved into a 16-13 lead.

In the second half, Ainscough extended the lead with the fourth of his six penalties before Batchelor crashed over again. Green's conversion put Exeter 20-19 ahead but, with penalties going either way, the lead changed another three times before the Exeter stand-off half's last-minute effort.

SCORES: Exeter: Tries: Woodman, Batchelor. Conversions: Green (2). Penalty goals: Green (4). Leeds: Try: Griffin. Conversions: Ainscough. Penalty goals: Ainscough (6).

EXETER: S. Doyle, M. Woodman, A. Turner, J. Thomas, S. Dore, A. Green, R. J. Jones, R. Gibbons, A. Brooking, P. Sturges, J. Batchelor, R. Baines, M. Curry, I. Dixon, R. Armstrong. John replaced by A. Maudsley (59th).

LEEDS: S. Tappin, S. Bartlett, D. Edwards, G. Ainscough, R. Mathias, C. Stephens, M. Carthorn, G. Baskers, M. Luffman, S. Shelly, M. Perrege, P. Davies, C. Radecanu, A. Yates, P. Griffin. Davies replaced by N. Green (59th). Referee: C. Rees (Somerset).

Former players want independent body to oversee rugby in Scotland

BY MARK SOUSTER

IF, after a year of trauma, the Scottish Rugby Union (SRU) thought it had won the hearts and minds of those involved in the sport, it learnt yesterday that it is mistaken. As the SRU prepared today to reveal its plans for the future running of the game — expected to include a streamlined executive and the co-option of advisers of some of the biggest names in Scottish business — Murrayfield is in danger of being trumped by a nap hand of high-profile former internationals.

Jim Aitken and David Sole, captains of grand slam-winning sides in 1984 and 1990 respectively, Finlay Calder and Gavin Hastings, who led the British Isles in 1989 and 1993, and Iain Milne have entered the fray. They are demanding that, at the very least, an independent commission — with the emphasis on independent — be set up to look at the way the sport is run in Scotland.

They despair at what they perceive to be secrecy shrouding the SRU's operations and the general apathy that is afflicting the game. With no axe to grind other than to see Scotland successful again, they hope their public stance will stimulate the type of debate that David Johnston, the Scotland assistant coach, unsuccessfully attempted to instigate in proposals submitted to the SRU last year.

"The union is not prepared to listen to anyone," Aitken, who fears the announcement from Murrayfield will merely

constitute a reshuffling of the deckchairs, said. "They have got the power and want to keep the power. They are accountable to no one. What other business in the country and a multimillion-pound one at that, is operated in this way? Somebody has got to stand up and be counted. David [Johnston] had a genuine attempt to have some realistic input into the running of the game, but he's been ignored."

As well as greater accountability and democracy, the coalition of such powerful names would like to see a commission set up along the lines of that which ultimately led to a restructuring of the New Zealand RFU. Among other things, the Boston

Report advocated a streamlined committee, and its recommendations were put into effect last year. "New Zealand allowed them a free hand and what their union did was act upon what was suggested," Aitken said.

Whether the "Murrayfield Five" will be successful is another matter, but the level of discontent at the direction the game is taking in Scotland is very real, and one the SRU knows it would be dangerous to ignore. Its insistence that districts should represent Scotland in Europe is only one part of the general malaise.

However, the SRU believes its vision, to be revealed today, will go a long way to answering its critics, among them the senior clubs' association, Scottish First Division Rugby, which may also seek further confrontation should the union's proposals offer only compromise.

It is understood that the opinions of some of the most illustrious names in the business world, including Sir George Mathewson, chief executive of the Royal Bank of Scotland, one of the SRU's main sponsors, have been canvassed and that individuals of his pedigree may well be involved in shaping the way the game is run.

The SRU was reluctant to comment on the developments yesterday, saying only that its own review had "sought a range of views from inside and outside Scottish rugby which address the key elements of management and accountability in the open era."



Calder: despair at SRU secrecy

Fylde open up big gap but remain cautious

Havant 13
Fylde 60

BY MICHAEL AYLWIN

THE Courage Clubs Championship third division is notable for the chasm that separates the leaders, Fylde, from the rest. In putting 60 points past struggling Havant on Saturday they opened up a nine-point lead over the chasing pack, but Graham Smith, formerly coach of England Colts, remained commendably cautious about his team's promotion prospects.

"I'm obviously pleased with our performance today and our position in the table, but there is a long way to go yet and we have some very difficult away fixtures ahead."

Morley and Exeter have two games in hand over the leaders, which could cut Fylde's lead to five. So the league is still alive.

Fylde's back row were one step ahead of Havant, and they boasted more invention at half back and greater speed out wide. Nine tries formed the backbone of their points tally. Steve Gough, their experienced stand-off half and leading points-scorer, collected

20 points and was the imaginative architect of the victory, while his partner at scrum half, Chris O'Toole, further unnerved the Havant defence with his running and claimed two sparkling tries.

But Fylde's threat was perhaps best personified in Mark Preston, the right wing, who has recently returned to the club after a spell in rugby league. He is Fylde's leading try-scorer and his pace and vision were instrumental in several Fylde tries, which included two for himself.

Havant competed effectively in the set pieces, particularly in the lineout, but, although there were plenty of encouraging signs, this game did nothing to ease their fight against relegation.

SCORES: Havant: Try: penalty by Conversion: Russell. Penalty goals: Russell (2). Fylde: Tries: O'Toole (2), Preston (2), Russell, Gough, Parker, Turner, Barclay. Conversions: Gough (6). Penalty goals: Gough.

HAVANT: H. Rutherford, A. Jovett, S. Boydell, J. Parker, A. Penlock, P. Russell, A. Chapman, D. Rees, C. Coward, J. Ailes, M. Webb, M. Kell, W. Knight, M. Rees, B. Pearce. Russell replaced by J. Connors (59). Rees replaced by D. Rutherford (59). Pearce replaced by S. Hedges (59).

FYLDE: A. Parker, M. Preston, I. Barclay, D. Turner, A. Ball, S. Gough, C. O'Toole, R. Langford, C. McIntyre, D. Wright, G. Russell, A. Taylor, P. Holmes, M. Greenstone, A. MacFarlane. Russell replaced by J. Davies (20th). Parker replaced by J. Webster (75). Referee: C. Rees (London).

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RUGBY UNION: LATE TRY BURST CONDEMNS IRELAND TO RECORD FIVE NATIONS' CHAMPIONSHIP DEFEAT

England save fireworks for finale

Ireland 6
England 46

FROM DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT
IN DUBLIN

CAN we cope with revelation and disappointment within the space of 80 minutes? The revelation came from an England side that, if it goes on like this, will destroy all five nations' championship records. The disappointment stemmed from the inaccuracy of so much play which a better side than Ireland would have punished, and with it the growing confidence of a young XV.

There is a balance to be struck between what we are entitled to expect from a team involved in the highest level of rugby in the northern hemisphere, and the development to full maturity of 15 players who came together only last month. For much of the first hour on Saturday, the inaccuracy of both teams at



Lansdowne Road would have made a New Zealander weep, yet by the end, so knowledgeable an individual as Sean Fitzpatrick, the All Blacks captain, could describe England as well down the road towards success.

Piece by piece the England jigsaw is coming together. Not only are they playing better for longer, but the key units are also coming to understand each other. Here it was the back row that found itself, perhaps impelled by the quality of those from the A side who would usurp them. Just as the combination of Curry, Diprose and Back had stood firm amid an untidy jumble of a game 24 hours earlier, so Rodder, with an authoritative display, Dallaglio and Hill showed how to destruct and, more important, construct.

Whether so much destruction is necessary before England's final turn of the screw remains a moot point, but who can argue with a side that has scored 87 points in two matches and seems poised to shatter the championship record — established by England in 1992 — of 118 points? Never before have they posted so high a score in a championship match, imposing on the way Ireland's worst defeat in the competition.

Poor Ireland. The bubble of confidence so disproportionately swelled after a one-point win in Wales popped resoundingly in the final 15 minutes.



Staples, right, and Topping are unable to prevent Sleightholme scoring the first of his two tries for England against Ireland on Saturday

when Gomersall scored the first of five tries that swept away the men in green. They must have known that it would not be their afternoon when, with only 11 minutes played, they lost Eric Miller, around whom so many of their tactical plans were laid.

To lose one member of the team's spine is bad enough; to lose a second and have a third hamstring is even worse. Miller, concussed as England's forwards swarmed over him, will serve the mandatory three-week rest and must miss Leicester's Pilkington Cup tie with Newcastle on Saturday, as well as Ireland's final match, with Scotland, on March 1. When Elwood followed him off, Ireland were left with only O'Meara, the young Cork Constitution scrum half, as a back replacement when Staples, one of their primary weapons of attack, pulled a hamstring.

If Miller was the intended ball-carrying target for his colleagues, Elwood was to be the executioner. His role passed to Humphreys, who is an entirely different kind of player, but whoever wore the No 10 shirt still had to endure a day in which Hogan, at

scrum half, was desperately out of sorts, to such an extent that O'Meara took his place to win a first cap. He may well retain it against Scotland.

As one side declined, so the other prospered, notably in the person of Grayson, whose calm control was such a feature of the game. Amid a welter of slow ball and obstruction, Grayson exuded authority under pressure and his goalkeeping gave England their significant 11-6 interval advantage before they turned to take the breeze. Two further penalties eased England clear, but neither side could create continuity.

Gomersall started with a dummy to the short side of a five-metre scrum and Ireland self-destructed. Their lineup worked well enough, but twice they chose to run out of

defence and first Topping, then Hickie, was scythed down and dispossessed. The primary beneficiaries were Sleightholme and Hill, though the intervening work was admirable and the cushion allowed Jack Rowell, the coach, to introduce Healey, for a first cap, and Guscott.

Both are blessed with speed and vision and the Irish cracks became chasms. Underwood, whose run from a missed clearance had created Sleightholme's first score, has always been liable to pop up in unexpected places. Now, glowing with confidence, he erupted into the line for one try and

then finished off in triumph a move that began 65 metres earlier and embraced ten passes.

The sixth try brought England's championship tally to ten, when last season they scored only three in four games. The average for the six matches this season is 5.5 tries, which puts the competition exactly on track for the record aggregate, set in 1911, of 55. Back to the future, you might say.

SCORES: Ireland: Penalties goals: Elwood (2). England: Tries: Sleightholme (2), Underwood (2), Gomersall (1), Conversions: Grayson (2). Penalties goals: Grayson (4).

IRELAND: J E Staples (Harlequins, capt), D A Hickie (St Mary's College), J C Ball (Northampton), M J Field (Munster), J A Topping (Bath), E P Elwood (Leinster), M Gomersall (Leinster), R P Neade (Leinster), P S Wallace (Scarlets), D S Cullen (Leinster), P S John (Scarlets), J W Davidson (London Irish), W D McBride (London Irish), S J Miller (Leinster), Miller replaced by A G Foley (Shannon, 12m), Elwood replaced by D G Humphreys (London Irish, 25), Hogan replaced by S T O'Meara (Cork Constitution, 56).

ENGLAND: T R G Stimpson (Newcastle), J M Sleightholme (Leinster), W D C Carling (Harlequins), P R de Glanville (Bath), T Underwood (Newcastle), P J Grayson (Northampton), A C T Gormley (Worcester), C G Rowntree (Leinster), M P Regan (Bath), J Leonard (Harlequins), S M Duffield (Worcester), M O Johnson (Leinster), S D Shaw (Bristol), R A Hill (Scarlets), T A K Rodder (Northampton), J Curry (Leinster), replaced by A Healey (Leinster, 74), Carling replaced by J C Guscott (Bath, 77).

Referee: C J Hewitt (New Zealand)

Ashton full of praise for rivals

THERE were no excuses from Brian Ashton after the meeting of Bath's two former coaches (David Hands writes). Ashton, now technical adviser to Ireland, said: "I'm delighted England didn't start the way they finished. In the last 15 minutes they slipped into a level of rugby with tremendous pace and finishing ability."

There were times in the first 50 when we were quite creative and broke England's line more times than they are used to, but we either lost the ball or ran out of support."

Jack Rowell, the England coach with whom Ashton worked at Bath, acknowledged the disruption Ireland had been creating waves this season so we thought it would be good for him to get the feel of it and I haven't seen Tim Rodder play that well for a while."

ing the game simple, keeping control, we didn't do very well.

"Once we get possession in a row, however, it showed how many half-handers we have in the forwards as well as the backs. Austin Healey has been creating waves this season so we thought it would be good for him to get the feel of it and I haven't seen Tim Rodder play that well for a while."

Stout defiance silences Lansdowne Road roar

Rob Andrew found the Dublin crowd strangely subdued as the enormity of Ireland's task became quickly apparent

EVERYTHING about Dublin on Saturday seemed unreal. An hour before kick-off Lansdowne Road was virtually empty. People were still filling in when the national anthems were being played. Expectations were left in the pews. Just as Ireland never fired, neither did the crowd.

Where was the cauldron-like atmosphere that is so much a part of Lansdowne Road? No place can lift a home team quite like Dublin or be as intimidating to a visiting side, yet Ireland never emerged from the starting blocks and England were a side of studied composure. The New Zealand maxim of subdue and penetrate was expertly followed. England

did to Ireland what they had managed against Scotland two weeks earlier, but this was a far more convincing performance. The game against Scotland, as emphatic as the result was, left question marks; not so on Saturday. So comfortable did England appear that they might have been playing in slippers.

England were patient, passed the test of character and in the final quarter — again — hit the opposition with a tremendous scoring burst. Yes, France will be tougher on Saturday week, but this is a big, physical and now abundantly confident England team. They are deserved favourites for the championship and an injury-ravaged France, on this form,

are unlikely to disturb their equilibrium. When Eric Miller was carried off early on, it was as if the crowd sensed the worst. It was quite obvious, too, that Eric Elwood was palpably unfit. Those injuries and the fact that Niall Hogan is nowhere near an international-class scrum half meant that the spine of the Ireland team had collapsed.

Perhaps only France are good enough to play catch-up rugby. Ireland, frankly, are hopeless at it. Once behind,

they were quickly buried. Brian Ashton probably pushed Ireland to bite off more than they could chew. If they were trying to con England by their rash early attempts to run the ball, they were kidding only themselves. Where were the high balls to put the England wings under pressure?

England really could not believe their luck. None of the Irish attributes of fire and passion were evident. All Ireland did was run into bigger, stronger England forwards,

who took the ball off them and caused damage. Tim Rodder, especially, came through a big test at No 8. His driving play and linking helped to give England the attacking platform from which they overran Ireland in as devastating a finish as I can recall.

Andy Gomersall, too, had a productive game, although some of his passes were again wayward. Austin Healey made an impact in his five minutes as an England scrum half, but you cannot judge a player on a few minutes when his side is so far ahead.

One of the keys to England's success is the measured calm of Paul Grayson, who is beginning to look composed at stand-off half. When under the cosh, Eng-

land know that Grayson's boot can make them 70 yards and relieve their forwards of the hard work. I have always said that Grayson was underrated, and time and again at international level he keeps proving himself, not least with his place kicking.

I still have qualms about one or two positions, but this is a settled side that has quickly proved itself and should not be disturbed.

Ireland were on a downward spiral from the first minute and their meeting with Scotland on Saturday week has the look of the wooden spoon decider. England will meet France on a record-scoring high, and I do not expect them to let themselves down at Twickenham.

Rowell's throne wobbled by Prince Jeremy

ANDREW LONGMORE



At Lansdowne Road

ANOTHER record victory for England, and still an overwhelming sense of frustration. Jack Rowell, the coach, might justifiably talk of the ten tries scored by his side over the first half of the five nations' championship and ask: "What more do we have to do?" He has a point or 87.

England did to Ireland exactly what they had done to Scotland and, for that matter, exactly what the New Zealand Barbarians had done to them in those dim, distant, sterile days before Christmas. They won and they won handsomely, running in six tries that ranged from the routine to the spectacular. And yet?

And yet the lonely figure of Jeremy Guscott — last on the field for England, first off — was a lingering symbol of what might have been. Guscott was graciously given three minutes in which to dirty his shorts. He failed miserably. By the end of his allotted span his whites were still pristine, but one delightful shimmy past Bell and Underwood was away. Moments later, the same combination rounded off a sparkling, all-singing, all-dancing England move. The England wing, who had shown welcome signs of a return to form, Lomax confidence in an earlier dash from his own tryline, would surely be the first signature on the "bring back Jerry" petition.

Three minutes, two tries made. "He is still the prince of centres," Rowell said, which begs several questions. Why is the prince of centres sitting on the bench for 77 minutes while his courtiers toil in front of him? What further damage might Bonnie Prince Jerry have inflicted over the course of the whole match? The prince might be asking roughly the same questions himself.

And yet in this new professional whirlwind of a game, it is not quite as easy as it seems. Guscott does not fit the pattern of the England play, not, at least, until the opposition have been ground into the sandy wastes of Lansdowne Road and Rowell has decided to press the button marked "interactivity", like some character in *Thunderbirds*. "England are go."

Interactivity is the rugby equivalent of total football, where backs become forwards, forwards handle and run like backs, and everyone is interchangeable. It is a favourite word of Rowell's, though it will not be found in many coaching manuals.

"Interactivity proceeded apace..." Rowell intoned afterwards. Rowell, alongside him Phil de Glanville nodded appreciatively.

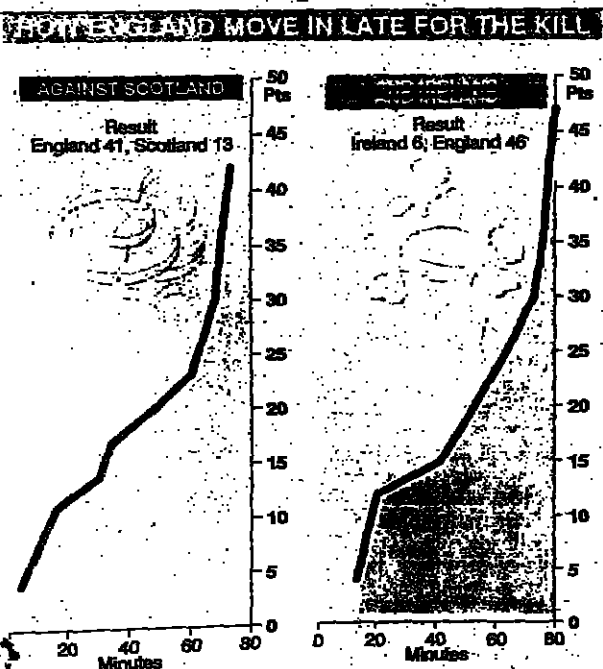
The last England try, a sweeping move from corner to corner, was an example of

interactivity worthy of the All Blacks. But, like all wizard ideas, there is a catch. Ten minutes of interactivity has to be preceded by 70 minutes of inactivity, of unspectacular back-row grinding. Without the necessary tenderising, it seems that interactivity is impossible, and the further trouble is that Guscott does not suit interactivity. He is too quick, too mercurial. He exploits unexpected gaps, short-circuits the fuse, sends the forwards puffing gladly back to their set-pieces. Far from binding backs and forwards, he cuts them in half.

De Glanville, in contrast, is a bricks and mortar man who brings solidity and structure to the whole, and Rowell made a point of praising his captain and Carling for their part in stemming Ireland's early second-half onslaught. Without a proper stage, Rowell was suggesting, not even the prince of centres can perform. The wearing down is a prerequisite for the tramping. Or, to put it his way: "We knocked them down, picked up the pieces and scored the points."

And yet. While Guscott remains a fringe figure, his celebrity will rise and so will the penalty for failure. Victory justifies Guscott's omission, defeat will be pilloried. Even the Irish, who had jeered the entrance of most of the England team for the warm-up, reserved a cheer or two for Guscott. The talented artist down on his luck is a figure of universal charm, at least until, as Le Tissier found out to his cost, the talent deserts him when the nation is watching. Then the artist is exposed as a charlatan and revenge is swift. The difference is that Guscott has proved himself at the highest levels. Le Tissier has not.

The prince himself is keeping his counsel. The prince of centres? "I have nothing to add to that," he said. And he shrugged and evaporated into the Dublin night.



TRY TRY TRY AGAIN

GO THE DISTANCE

مكةذا من الامم

FOOTBALL

Intransigent Wednesday refuse to be deflected

Bradford City 0
Sheffield Wednesday 1

By PETER BALL

IT MAY not be the year of the underdog after all if Bradford City's fate is anything to go by. Sheffield Wednesday bucked the trend yesterday, surviving Bradford's onslaught to win a thrilling FA Cup fifth-round tie as Richie Humphreys's late shot was deflected past the unlikely Mark Schwarzer by Nicky Mohan.

It was less than Bradford deserved. Even though Wednesday got stronger as the game progressed, the Bradford defence, with Schwarzer a pillar of strength, held firm with a certainty that Wednesday lacked, and they had produced most of the excitement for a packed, bubbling crowd on a raw afternoon.

Chris Waddle fulfilled pre-

side one used to associate with the club or with David Pleat, the manager, but they take a lot of breaking down.

"They aren't going to play a lot of football with Atherton and Hyde in central midfield, but they'll be dogged," Kamara said, "and people tell me that it's not the style, it's the results that count."

They needed to be dogged yesterday, but although Atherton and Hyde battled in midfield, they owed much to Walker as Bradford threatened to sweep them away in a heated, sometimes overheated, first half. Atherton and Hyde incurred two of Wednesday's three bookings inside the first ten minutes, and even Walker was ruffled by the pace and passion of Bradford's attacks.

Waddle probed ceaselessly, and his corners were a constant source of danger to Pressman. At times, the FA Cup Carling Premiership side's goal led a charmed life as Bradford corners swung in and all defenders came up to add their weight to the attack. One swung in to hit the post and Pressman was lucky to escape with a free kick, given against Waddle, when all he appeared to have done was stand his ground as the goalkeeper ran into him.



FA CUP

dictions that he would be the best player on the field, a point recognised by the Wednesday fans, but he had willing assistance. At the back, O'Brien, 17, belied his years with an authoritative marking job on Carbone. Jacobs ran enthusiastically. Pinto showed a fine touch and, above all, the young Hamilton pushed Waddle for Bradford's player-of-the-match award, combining excellent touch with pace and maturity.

It was not quite enough, though. "That's typical of our season," Chris Kamara, the Bradford manager, said. "We didn't play as much football as we have done on occasion, but we still played almost all of it in this game. I never thought they would score, but we just didn't have enough up front."

"We've had a little dream, but now it's back to reality and we've got to concentrate on picking up some [Nationwide League first division] points. Wednesday must think they've got a chance of winning the Cup now. With the teams that are left they must fancy themselves."

Wednesday are certainly overdue, as their record of only one defeat in 18 games suggests. They are not the flowing

BRADFORD CITY (4-4-2): M. Schwarzer — M. Mohan, J. Driver, A. O'Brien — D. Hamilton, S. Pinto (sub: R. Laid, 88min), L. Doughty, W. Jacobs — C. Waddle — E. Kinnear. SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (4-4-1-1): K. Pressman — I. Nolan, J. Newsum, D. Walker, S. Nicol — R. Humphreys, P. Atherton, G. Hyde, M. Pemberton — B. Carbone (sub: D. Frost, 90) — A. Bloom. Referee: G. Barber.



Pinto, the Bradford City midfielder, tangles on the touchline with Nolan, of Sheffield Wednesday, yesterday

Wimbledon gaining self-belief

Wimbledon 2
Queens Park Rangers 1

By BRIAN GLANVILLE

THE managers agreed. For Joe Kinnear, of winning Wimbledon, and Stewart Houston, of resilient Queens Park Rangers, the turning point came just before half-time when Wimbledon scored quickly, and at such a delicate psychological moment, wiped out QPR's advantage.

Kinnear called it "crucial". Houston thought: "If we had only hung in there till half-time, it could probably have been a different game in the second period."

As it was, ten minutes into that period, Robbie Earle scored a spectacular goal, his 150th in first-class football, and Wimbledon were in the sixth round of the FA Cup.

Since, in modern football, there is nothing so demanding as success, tomorrow sees them away to Leicester City in the first leg of the semi-final of the Coca-Cola Cup.

"It's something new to cope with," Kinnear said. "It's the new kind of pressure, because we've always had to live with the pressure of staying in the Premier League. Once we've got over that hurdle, we can concentrate on the cups."

ically have, despite losing their first three Premiership games.

For much of the first half, QPR certainly played the better football. There was a sweep and an invention about their game that Wimbledon took time to match, and in the twentieth minute, QPR should have taken what would have been a deserved lead. The movement was exhilarating. Hateley, on another of his days of grace, threatening in the air, intelligent on the ground, sent Peacock away from the right.

Peacock released Murray, coming in unmarked from the left, and a goal seemed sure, but Sullivan stretched out a leg and blocked the shot.

With Barker working hard



Gayle glancing header

and well. Ready and McDermott dominant in the air against Wimbledon's usual set-piece bombardment. QPR, as Houston claimed, matched their senior opponents. This despite the fact that Spencer was restricted by an injured ankle.

QPR scored at last after 40 minutes. Peacock curled in a left-footed cross from the right and when it reached the head of an unattended Hateley, you knew there could be no appeal. In it inexorably went.

Kinnear was not happy. "Looked about five yards offside, Hateley's goal," he insisted, debating. "The only person who didn't see it was the linesman."

It was the measure of Wimbledon's morale that they should strike back so swiftly. Three minutes later, the dynamic Leonhardsen, the sharpest thorn in QPR's side, an amalgam of energy and flair, found Gayle, who hit the bar. When the ball eventually reached Holdsworth on the far post, his shot was blocked by Sonner.

Over came Kinnear's left-wing corner, and for once, QPR's aerial defence was found wanting. Ready was meant to be countering Gayle, but Gayle's head glanced the ball into the net.

Things, now, would change. "I think we played a

lot better," Kinnear said. "We improved the tempo in the second half. We were waiting for things to happen in the first half and their scoring really jolted us. I told them at half-time, if you take your foot off the accelerator, you'll go out: it'll be another banana skin."

Ten minutes after the break, Leonhardsen, found Earle, who, with a skilful sidestep, made room to beat Sonner with a right-footed shot from outside the box.

Rangers still menaced in fits and starts. Hateley had a header turned over the top by Sullivan and an attempt blocked on the line by Cunningham. But, against that, Leonhardsen hit the post after a superb solo run.

"It's just a question of getting it in our heads that we've got the ability to win something this year," Kinnear said. "It needs plenty of work, plenty of commitment and we've got all that."

Plus Earle and Leonhardsen.

WIMBLEDON (4-4-2): N. Sullivan — K. Cunningham, D. Blackwell, C. Perry, A. Kinnear — V. Jones, R. Earle, E. Spiller, O. Leonardson (sub: S. McWhorter, 80min), D. Holdsworth (sub: J. Goodwin, 40), M. Gayle.

QUEENS PARK RANGERS (4-4-2): J. Spencer — S. Yelland, A. McDermott, K. Barker, R. Murray (sub: D. Ditch, 90) — T. Spencer, B. Murray, S. Barker, G. Peacock — M. Hateley, J. Spencer. Referee: J. Worrall.

Leeds crumble as Portsmouth expose flaws in foundations

Leeds United 2
Portsmouth 3

By DAVID MADDOCK

WATCHING Leeds United brings to mind an observation from Pablo Picasso. "There's no such thing as a bad Picasso," he mused, "but some are less good than others."

Leeds, of course, do not bear comparison with the artist, not even to allow a tortured joke about blue periods. Juggle his words around, however, and you have a reasonable precis of their style, their mentality. There is no such thing as a good performance from them, just less bad ones. This was a very bad one indeed.

Portsmouth, of the Nationwide League first division, were technically and tactically too sophisticated for their apparently superior opponents. Yet Leeds had recorded five consecutive clean sheets before this FA Cup tie, promoting thoughts of Wembley.

Quite why such notions had gained serious currency was a question muttered by everyone at Elland Road on Saturday. The answer was simple enough, and was refreshingly given by Terry Fenwick, the Portsmouth manager.

"They are a side who can dominate and stifle away from home, because they are a big, physical team," he said. "But they are not so clever at home because here they have to create."

Before the tie, Lee Sharpe, one of Elland Road's more imaginative influences, said that their play in recent months has been to defend doggedly and hope to sneak a goal from a set-piece or a scramble. It is not pretty, but under the circumstances George Graham, the Leeds manager, found himself in it was an effective survival route.

At Arsenal, Graham's sides were creative enough, but he puts in the mean-spirited defensive foundations first, and Leeds are still very much in that initial phase. Asked if he had, in recent weeks, merely papered over the cracks with defensive organisation, Graham's silence as he struggled for an answer indicated that he desperately wanted to say "yes", long before he diplomatically avoided answering the question.

Fenwick had come to the same conclusion, aided and abetted by Terry Venables, his club's new owner. He knew that Portsmouth's best opportunity of progressing to the quarter-finals was to ensure they did not descend to Leeds's scrappy, physical level.

The manner in which they

avoided such crudity was surprising, even to their manager. Portsmouth battled all right, but when they won the ball, their passing was on a different plane to their opponents. Swift and incisive, they manoeuvred the Leeds defence into positions so uncomfortable that Molenaar, the previously impressive new signing at centre half, was reduced to beating the ground in frustration.

The power and persistence up front of Lee Bradbury and Mathias Svensson was invigorating, but it was the midfield control exercised by the neat, experienced Hillier and the exuberant Hall that allowed Portsmouth to dictate the contest. With Alan McLoughlin, before his injury, and then the impressive young Joe offering support, it was the visiting midfield that appeared to display FA Cup Premiership quality.

Portsmouth's game-plan was simple: draw the central defenders wide to allow space for the midfield players to run into. Bradbury moved from the centre after seven minutes to collect a throw from Simp-

Wolves tamed 31
Harts held 31

son and cross into the void he had left, where McLoughlin, starting in, headed home unchallenged.

Bradbury again caused problems to win a penalty after Kelly handled his header. The problem, though, was that McLoughlin, the regular penalty-taker, had limped out of the action and Simpson saw his kick saved by Martyn.

Such profligacy appeared ominous, and after the break Leeds equalised when Wallace produced his side's one moment of real skill to send Lee Bowyer scuttling into the box to lift a shot calmly over Knight. With 35 minutes remaining, the initiative was briefly with the home side, but not the talent.

It was Svensson, running wide, who caused the damage, first, by cutting inside, the bemused Molenaar to drive fiercely beyond Martyn, and then crossing to allow Bradbury a close-range shot under the body of the Leeds goalkeeper.

Even a Bowyer header in the fifth minute of stoppage time could not disguise Portsmouth's palpable superiority. LEEDS UNITED (4-4-2): M. Mohan — R. Molenaar, G. Hills, L. Peden — G. Kelly, L. Bowyer, M. Jackson (sub: R. Frost, 88min), C. Palmer, A. Dwyer — S. Yelland, P. Veale. PORTSMOUTH (4-4-2): A. Knight — A. Thompson, R. Palmer, A. Axford — R. Hillier, A. McLoughlin (sub: S. Hillier, 20), L. Bradbury, F. Simpson (sub: A. Dobson, 90) — L. Bradbury, M. Svensson (sub: M. Allen, 88). Referee: P. Alcock.

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Asanovic outshines new double act

Derby County 1
West Ham United 0

By NICK SZCZEPANIK

ASKED about West Ham United before this game between teams for whom the term "goal-shy" might have been invented, Jim Smith, the Derby County manager, said: "They've got some good footballers, but they've got the same problems as us."

To some, there are no problems, only solutions. For West Ham, the solution involved spending £7.3 million on two new forwards, Harrison and Kitson. Smith chose to re-marshal his existing forces, giving a more attacking role to Asanovic, the Croatia international. The score accurately reflects which solution was more immediately successful.

Asanovic, easily the man of the match, was involved in every Derby attack and made and scored the only goal after 52 minutes.

His aggressive run into the heart of the West Ham defence positively invited the lunging tackle from Ferdinand over which he tumbled; his penalty left Miklosko rooted to his line. "It was a tremendous run," Smith said. "He knew what he was doing and where he was going. He was the difference. We gave him freedom to play and go forward more and he kept giving them problems."

Late tackles, retaliation, shirt-pulling, blatant feigning of injury, and that ritual pushing and shoving peculiar to footballers, commonly known as "handbags at ten paces", were all routine. His own inconsistency did not help; a vicious tackle from behind by Kitson on Stimac went unpunished by a card of any colour. "It was very heated," Smith agreed. "I suppose with two teams in the position they are, it's going to be like that."

Ashby also raised West Ham temperatures by refusing to play two strong penalty appeals. Stimac, who kept a tight rein on Harrison, dispossessing him arrogantly on several occasions, was lucky when Dick's cross clearly struck his arm. The visitors also had a case when Kitson fell on his way past Houlst after McGrath had, for once, been beaten by a pass from Ferdinand, their best performer.

"A blatant penalty," Harry Redknapp, the West Ham manager said. "How the referee didn't see it, I don't know." Jim Smith, having put three more vital points between his team and West Ham, who occupy the third relegation position, could afford to be sympathetic. "I thought it could have been a penalty," he said. "It's hard to bring two new players in up front when they haven't worked together. Like us, their confidence is not that high, is it? The confidence factor makes all the difference. I hope this win brings ours back."

DERBY COUNTY (4-4-2-1): R. Houlst — G. Rowan, P. McGee, J. Stimac — J. Carlsby, P. van der Laan, P. Treloar, C. Powell — C. Dally, A. Asanovic — D. Stimac. WEST HAM UNITED (4-4-2): M. Miklosko — S. Peto, M. Bevan, J. M. Peto, S. Peto, J. Dick — T. Barendse, R. Ferdinand, J. Warrington, G. Hylton, K. Howard (sub: F. Llewellyn, 79) — J. Harrison, P. Nelson. Referee: G. Ashby.

Community may save ailing club

By ANDREW LONGMORE

BOURNEMOUTH, still in receivership and deep in debt, are set to become the first community-owned football club in Europe under revolutionary plans put forward by Trevor Watkins, the London-based solicitor who is trying to ensure the club's long-term survival.

A trust fund, set up initially to pay a £300,000 tax bill, has already raised £140,000 and support has been so strong that the trust committee chaired by Watkins now aims to create a new company to run the Nationwide League second division club, with the trust retaining 51 per cent of the shares along the lines of the American football's new Super Bowl champions, the Green Bay Packers.

"We think this could be the blueprint not just for the survival of Bournemouth, but of many clubs in the lower divisions," Watkins said. "The trust is aiming to raise £15 million by the end of February to create an entirely new company, possibly called AFC Bournemouth 97 Ltd, which would buy the Dean Court ground and other assets from the receivers. The deal needs to be in place by March 6, when the club has to meet the demands of the Inland Revenue, but the scheme has the support of the Football League, the local council and the receivers called in earlier this month to administer debts of £4.4 million."

If successful, the new trust-owned club would go ahead with plans to build a new stadium in time for the 1998 season and give the manager, Mel Machin, time to develop a new team.

Tottenham raise spirits to deny Arsenal's ascent

Tottenham Hotspur 0
Arsenal 0

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

ON AN afternoon of FA Cup shockwaves, which reverberated around White Hart Lane via radio, public address system and word of mouth, Tottenham Hotspur and Arsenal disputed no more than territorial bragging rights on Saturday.

A predictable hotch-potch of occasional blandness and intermittent ferocity produced a result that neither side could wholly object to. When hostilities had ceased, nobody had lost, face had been saved, honours were even.

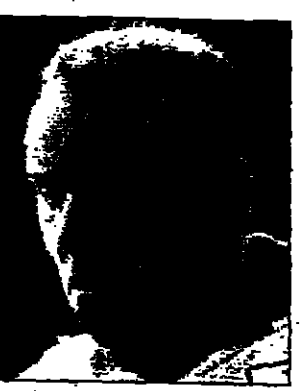
Tottenham claimed the moral high ground, having again had to take the field without Messrs Sheringham, Armstrong, Seales, Vega and others. Though honest in their endeavours, and with Anderson scampering effectively through his first 90-minute test, since November, they inevitably lacked the cutting edge to beat Lukic.

Iversen may run and jump like the young buck that he is but he needs experience, a guiding influence at his shoulder. Rosenthal was as hit-and-miss as always, mostly miss, and long gone is the status he enjoyed as a "supersub" in his previous existence with Liverpool.

Arsenal will feel greater the loss of two points. A two-goal winning margin would have seen them regain the leadership of the FA Cup Premiership for the first time since December, and would have added spice to the visit of Manchester United to High-bury on Wednesday.

Strangely subdued showings from Wright, Bergkamp and Merson, counter-balanced by a typically solid defensive display, summed up their lot. Tony Adams, not fit enough for England against Italy at Wembley on Wednesday, soldiered on as only he can; Boulton and Keown offered rugged support.

"It was a chance to go top, of course it was," Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal manager, said. "But, mathematically, we are still OK. The United game, we must win it, but I



Rosenthal off target

think that every game. Maybe I think that a bit more for this one."

Gerry Francis, the Tottenham manager, again lamented his expensive absenteeism, almost embarrassed at his repetition of the past few months, also rued a victory squandered, considering everything, but disappointed at the result, he said. "It's the strongest squad I've had since I've been here — if only they were all fit."

Excuses aside, the crowd were entertained, on a strictly

parochial level. Blood and guts were not quite spilled — only Parlour and Boulton, of Arsenal, were booked — yet the exchanges were keen and contested with a thinly disguised contempt. Graham Poll, the referee, kept reasonable order in his idiosyncratic fashion.

Rosenthal set the trend, in the first minute, with an awful finish from Edinburgh's low cross. Nine days earlier, he had scored twice, and missed a penalty, for the second team in a 2-1 win over Arsenal reserves in the Avon Insurance Combination. Typical Rosenthal.

He had another effort disallowed for offside — perversely, his best strike of the match — could not take advantage of Lukic's fumble from Anderson's fierce shot and also wasted a gilt-edged opportunity when doggedly dispossessing Keown and then ignoring the better-placed Iversen.

Arsenal often looked impressive, playing pretty triangles amid the midfield mayhem, but flattered, Wright and Bergkamp lacked sharpness and Vieira's initial enterprise faded, though Parlour persevered, Merson appeared lost. Walker had only two saves of note to make, from Bergkamp and Keown.

The supporters left dissatisfied: of Tottenham's failure to sneak success and of Arsenal's failure to reach the top. They at least had the heroics of Portsmouth, Cheshirefield and Wrexham to talk about.

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (4-4-2): I. Wright — D. Boulton, C. Colwell, S. Campbell — S. Carr, D. Anderson, D. Howie, A. Sinton, J. Eastmond (sub: S. Merson, R. Rosenthal). ARSENAL (4-4-2): J. Lukic — M. Keown, A. Adams, S. Boulton — L. Boulton, P. Veale, P. Merson (sub: S. Hughes, 88min), R. Parlour, W. Wrexham — D. Bergkamp — J. Wright. Referee: G. Poll.

Oliver Holt witnesses tears amid the triumph as Nottingham Forest are beaten Chesterfield cling to impossible dream

In the dying minutes, with the score 1-0, some betrayed their fear by clapping their hands in prayer. Others implored the Chesterfield players to keep the ball in the Nottingham Forest half, terrified that a last attack might destroy their dreams. Injury time seemed interminable and the fans in the main stand — the only stand — begged David Elleray to blow his whistle.

Behind some of the journalists, who were sitting with the supporters because the Nationwide League second division club's tiny press box could not cope with the demand, the shrill voices of children corrupted their team's nickname in their anxiety, pleading with the "Sprites" to hang on. When their fathers had tired of trying to soothe them with knowing warnings about not yet hearing the far lady sing, they abandoned themselves to the emotion of the occasion, too. "You're watching history, here," one of them told his son.

When the waiting was over and Chesterfield were in the quarter-finals of the FA Cup for the first

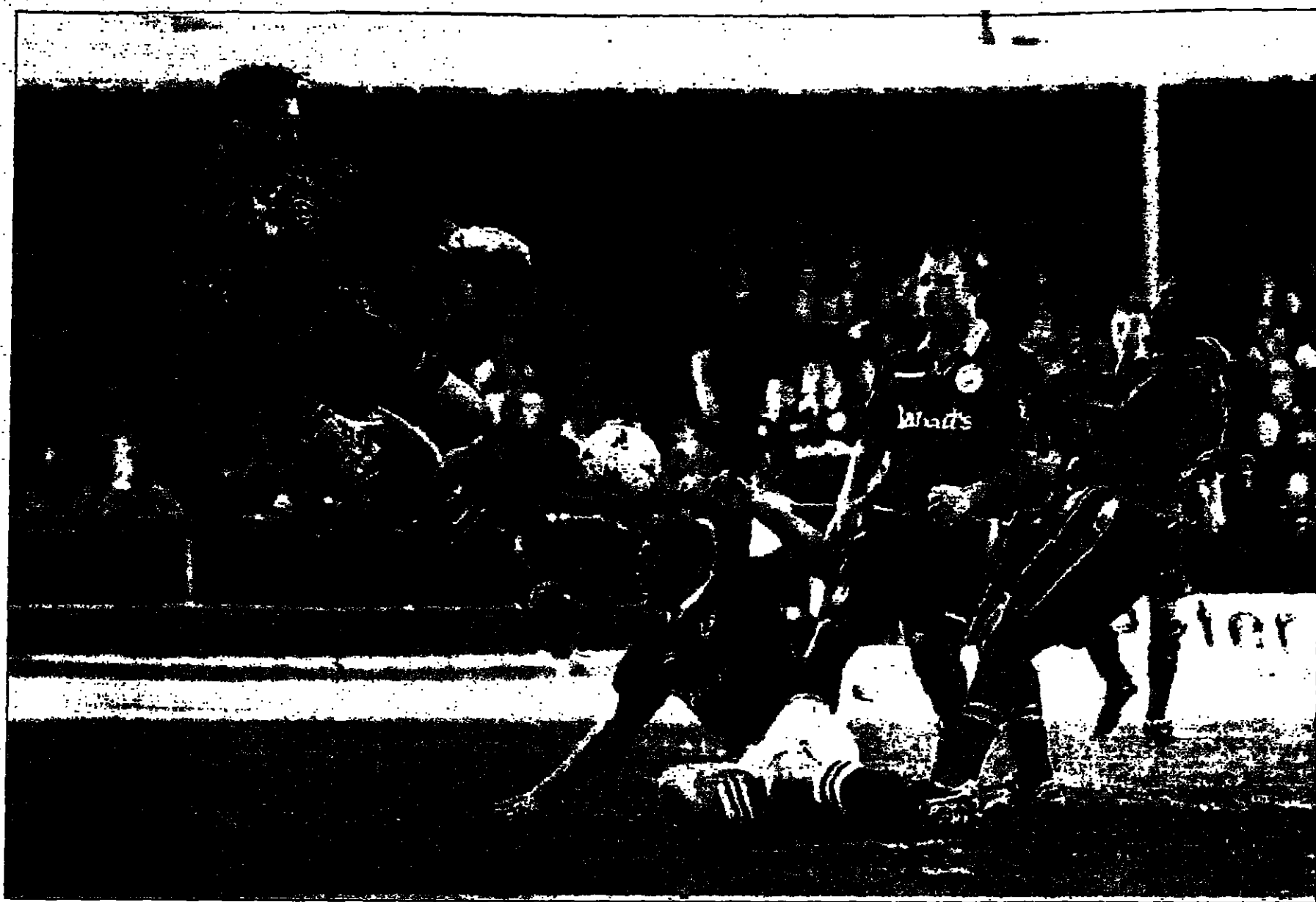


time in their long history, the supporters ran on to the pitch and bore the players from the muddy Saltergate field on their shoulders. Others knelt to kiss the turf. Grown men were weeping with joy. For a few seconds, it seemed excessive. It seemed strange.

Strange, because the creeping gentrification of football is stripping it of passion such as this. The loss of fervour and the dilution of devotion evident at so many FA Cup games is a sad sight. The FA Cup is a game of the people, a game of the streets, a game of the heart. It is a game that has been played since the 19th century, a game that has been played in every corner of the country, a game that has been played by every man, woman and child who has ever lived.

For one thing, it is a town centre ground, surrounded by other institutions that once were pillars of the community. The Labour Club, serving lunches to supporters, is on one side of the ground, opposite the headquarters of the Derbyshire Mineworkers' Association, dark and empty. Across the road from the stand, the Guides' Association building is next to the Baptist church. A short way away, the town's famous crooked spire rises over the rooftops.

Inside the stadium, terracing borders three sides of the pitch. The



Crossley, the Nottingham Forest goalkeeper who was later sent off, saves from Howard, the Chesterfield forward, at Saltergate. Photograph: Laurence Griffiths

roofs that shelter the fans are still low enough to kick a ball over, enabling supporters who could not get tickets to perch on rooftops and window ledges and watch from there. The players are still close enough that you can hear every word of their shouted instructions, hear the crunch of their tackles and the thud of their shots. You could also sense the sullen despair of the Forest team as the end neared.

The visitors hardly put up a fight. They did not fashion a chance. Saunders, Campbell and Roy did not test a defence manned by two second-choice players covering for injured team-mates. Chesterfield's margin of victory should have been bigger.

They played unimaginatively themselves in the first half, hoofing the ball out of defence in the

general direction of Morris, their centre forward, hoping to pounce on his flicks and nod-downs. Much of the play was unrefined and unrefined, even if Chesterfield did produce the outstanding chance of the opening 45 minutes, Crossley bringing off a fine reaction save from Howard's header after half an hour.

In the second half, though, Forest abandoned the struggle. Chesterfield, ninth in the second division but with enough games in hand to challenge for the play-offs, ran them ragged, and Stuart Pearce, the visitors' player-manager, imprisoned on the sidelines because of suspension, was powerless to rouse them.

The goal came in the 53rd minute. Howard ran on to Chris Beaumont's through-ball and took

it round Crossley. The Wales goalkeeper brought him down and was shown the red card. Tom Curtis sent Alan Fettes, the substitute goalkeeper, the wrong way with his penalty.

Two minutes later, Carr's thumping header from a corner rattled the underside of the Forest crossbar, and eight minutes from the end, after almost continuous Chesterfield pressure, Howard went round Fettes but stabbed the ball at the empty goal so weakly that it was hacked away before it could trickle into the net.

Afterwards, down in their changing-room, with paint flaking off the ceiling and hot-water pipes and their kit flung on to a wooden table, they sprayed champagne at the television cameras and talked to John Motson for Match of the Day.

"We are in the last eight of the biggest knockout competition in the world," John Duncan, their manager, said. "You can use any superlative you like to describe what this means to the town and to the club. It is amazing to think that we are only two matches away from Wembley."

Curtis, who was a student at Loughborough University a year ago, was the man most in demand in the throng. "If we win the FA Cup and get promotion," he said, "we'd have to call that a good season. I dream about the game last night, but we won 3-0 in the dream. Still, I thought we outplayed them in just about every department."

Farther down the corridor, the club chairman, J. Norton Lea, an avuncular figure with snowy white

hair, was talking about the future, about the plans to move the club to a new 12,000 all-seater ground on the site of the town's greyhound stadium.

It seems likely that raw, visceral days like this Saturday in Chesterfield among the Spirettes will be fewer and farther between, and their absence will be mourned with the same melancholy that the poet, Edward Thomas, felt in the passing of rural England at the turn of the century. Days like Saturday, just like one of the felled willow coppices he describes, are "first known when lost".

CHESTERFIELD (2-4-3): S. Morris — J. Hewitt, D. Carr, P. Holland — C. Perkins, C. Beaumont, T. Curtis, M. Jones, G. Kellie (sub: J. Brown, S. Brown, M. Johnson — A. Langer (sub: M. Newman, C. B. Venn, C. Holland, A. Long — P. Fettes, P. Devlin, WREXHAM (4-4-2): M. Crossley — D. Lytle, S. Beaumont (sub: P. McGee, S. Brown, C. Cooper, S. Christie — K. Campbell, A. Houlden, B. Williams, I. Wain (sub: S. Gormall, 72) — S. Roy (sub: A. Fettes, 54), D. Saunders. Referee: P. Riley.

Birmingham bow to quality from different league



Hughes, right, enjoys the celebrations after equalising

Birmingham City 1
Wrexham 3

By KEITH PUXE

FORTUNE can take a team only so far in the FA Cup; spirit may win a tie, but not the competition. There comes a time when talent must be put to the test and, on Saturday, it was Wrexham's turn to show their true colours. They were not found wanting.

Their players, supporters and manager might have been unwilling to accept it, but the fact remains that Birmingham City were eliminated by a clearly superior side. Wrexham's passing was tidier, their finishing more emphatic. Most important of all, their control — of the ball, of their adrenalin flow — was not so much from a lower division as a different league.

A shock? Hardly. Wrexham

were merely following the trail blazed across St Andrew's in recent seasons by Altrincham and Kidderminster Harriers, among others, as Birmingham were exposed as a hard-working but desperately limited team destined never to fulfil the expectations of a passionate following. Wasn't it ever thus?

That Trevor Francis, the Birmingham manager — henceforth to be known as "the beleaguered Birmingham manager", until he can repair a disintegrating season — would point to the 57th-minute sending-off of Paul Devlin, his leading scorer, as the turning point of this fifth-round tie, was as predictable as it was erroneous.

Trailing unluckily at half-time, Wrexham had already begun good the deficit, had already begun to impose their more fluent and attractive style on their supposed superiors. The two goals that followed were a reward for their

expertise, Devlin's dismissal no more than a convenient excuse.

"I felt we were in reasonable control," Francis said. "The sending-off changed the game. When you consider some of the challenges that went on in the previous hour, the decision was very harsh." He, though, had had a poor view of a challenge on Chalk that, from behind the dugout, appeared high and late, but hardly malicious. The Match of the Day cameras later showed that Devlin's studs were driven recklessly into Chalk's knee and that Martin Bodenham, well-positioned, had made an entirely correct decision.

So Wrexham are in the quarter-finals for only the third time in their history, having toyed with defeat and teased their supporters from day one. They had come within 15 minutes of defeat against mighty Colwyn Bay back in November, trailed Scunthorpe United

four times in the second round and needed a replay — their third — to add to West Ham United's embarrassment in January before accounting for Peterborough United — again away from home, again after twice going behind — in the fourth round. If Brian Flynn, the Wrexham manager, does have a magic formula, it is simply to ensure that his side lies in a goal or two and then lets ability take over.

"I have never thought that we were out of the competition," Flynn — henceforth to be known as "the managerial target of several Premiership clubs" until this Cup run ends — said. "We have shown many times this season that we have the spirit as well as the ability [they have also twice come from three goals adrift to draw second division matches]. I was still confident at half-time. We just got better as the game went on."

If there was any sympathy for Birmingham, it was generated by

the sight of Steve Bruce dragging himself from the field. The captain's first goal for his club, a thumping right-foot half-volley, had induced fleeting optimism and he subsequently tackled himself to exhaustion as Wrexham took over — but it was isolated heroism.

For all the measured nature of their approach play, it was two set-pieces that sent Wrexham on their way. Ward's magnificent delivery of a dead ball allowing first Hughes and then Humes to power headers past Bennett. With the match won, Connolly broke free of Johnson to toe-end an injury-time third. "I hope you agree that we were a credit to the second division, to Wrexham and to North Wales," Flynn said. They were.

WREXHAM CITY (4-4-2): J. Bennett — K. Brown, S. Bruce, G. Kellie (sub: J. Brown, S. Brown, M. Johnson — A. Langer (sub: M. Newman, C. B. Venn, C. Holland, A. Long — P. Fettes, P. Devlin, WREXHAM (4-4-2): M. Crossley — D. Lytle, S. Beaumont (sub: P. McGee, S. Brown, C. Cooper, S. Christie — K. Campbell, A. Houlden, B. Williams, I. Wain (sub: S. Gormall, 72) — S. Roy (sub: A. Fettes, 54), D. Saunders. Referee: P. Riley.

Coventry show value of desire

Blackburn Rovers 1
Coventry City 2

By MARK HODKINSON

THE electronic clock above the Darwin End read 2.59pm and Coventry City were already picking the ball out of their net. Stephen Lodge, the referee, had started proceedings ahead of schedule and caught the visitors with their finger still poised over the snooze button.

As they lifted their boots back to kick off once more, memories of a traumatic recent past must have flickered through the minds of the Coventry players. A month ago, they were thrashed 4-0 at Ewood Park in the FA Cup Premier-ship; then there were the indignities of their FA Cup third-round spats with non-League Woking.

In dressing-room vernacular, this was a call to arms and Coventry, so often found wanting this season, rallied impressively. Their play was rarely crafted or considered, but it was compensated by a passion for victory. Success in this FA Cup fourth-round tie was palpable of a much higher tender than it appeared for Blackburn.

Tony Parkes, the Blackburn caretaker-manager, had all but warned Coventry to expect an early play in his match programme notes. "Deception and surprise are

the key words, as you have to catch the opposition napping," he wrote. Le Saux threaded a pass to Sherwood and, in one sweet move, he steered the ball past Ogrizovic. Fifty seconds had elapsed.

The play was comparatively even until Telfer blasted a shot straight at Jess in the penalty area. He steadied himself and crashed it beyond Flowers. Just before half-time, a Whelan through-ball ran to Huckerby and he placed it adroitly past Flowers, who had raced from his line like a man desperate to catch the last train home.

Blackburn's best chance to retrieve the game was a penalty

Results and tables 30

awarded after Borrows had pushed over Gallacher. Sutton's dreadful attempt summarised Blackburn's indecision. There was no power or intent in the kick, merely a prod forward towards the middle of the goal. Ogrizovic saved and, inevitably, was first to the rebound.

Both Gallacher and Berg hit the crossbar, but there was a pervading sense of victory belonging, rightly, to Coventry. They were quicker to the tackle, hyperactive in their checker-board shirts, and Gordon Strachan was always near-by with a cry of encouragement.

Once again, the manager named himself as substitute, which allowed him the facility of ostensibly warming up just a few yards from play while he carried out some surreptitious coaching. Stephen Lodge objected at one juncture, but was left speechless.

"That was an all-time great, that one," Strachan said. "He came over to me pointing his finger and I said, 'What's up with you, I'm the sub!' He said nothing but just kept waving his finger at me as if he was telling me off."

In recent weeks, Strachan and his team have endured a fair amount of finger-wagging and he relished the new mantle shown by his team: "We have beaten a very good side today. We did it by battling and showing character. Questions were asked everywhere after our performance in the third round, but they do not need to talk anymore, they just need to see the result of today's game."

Parkes hinted afterwards that Premiership points were of much more value than a Cup run. He did not need to say as much; his team had already done it for him.

BLACKBURN ROVERS (4-3-3): T. Flowers — J. Borrows, C. Hendry, H. Berg, G. Le Saux — T. Sherwood, W. McGinley, S. Fittler (sub: P. Whelan, S. Brown) — K. Gallacher, C. Sutton (sub: G. Donie, 78), J. Wicks. COVENTRY CITY (4-3-1-2): S. Ogrizovic — P. Telfer, R. Shaw, P. Williams, M. Hall — K. Richardson, S. Borrows, N. Whelan — G. McAllister — E. Jones, D. Huckerby (sub: P. Nelson, 77). Referee: S. Lodge.

Vital break goes against Clark

Manchester City 0
Middlesbrough 1

By PETER BALL

FIFTH-ROUND FA Cup ties are always eagerly awaited but often fail to live up to expectations. On Saturday, Manchester City's supporters went home disappointed; Frank Clark, their manager, was unsurprised. "The game went as we expected, very close, very tight," he said. "One break was always going to settle it and they got it."

He might have added spiteful, and did add "niggling" to his description. He might have added that Middlesbrough got more than one break — a couple of lucky ones from the referee and his assistants as well as the incisive break in which the otherwise subdued Juninho made his decisive contribution.

But instead of complaining, Clark accepted the reverse philosophically, saying that Middlesbrough just about deserved it. He was being generous. "We didn't work their keeper enough to deserve a win," Clark explained.

City lost out where it mattered; Ravanelli and Juninho were the better of the two front pairs by some distance. It was not really a game for Kinkladze and Juninho, both generally being smothered.

Kinkladze was troubled by a groin strain and limped away just after the hour; Juninho finally found space and City were punished.

But the contrast between the two spearheads was more telling. Ravanelli was involved in some silly arg-bargy, and missed a glorious chance, but he made a nuisance of himself — to City, to his team-mates, to the referee — all afternoon. Rösler was anonymous; he hardly had a kick.

But if the front pairs had swapped sides, City would have won by a distance, because everywhere else they looked the better team. Lomas and McGoldrick

dominated midfield, particularly before the interval; the two young full backs played with poise.

By the interval City should have been leading with a bit to spare. But Summerbee lobbed wide with Roberts stranded — and when Brightwell did not, his effort was ruled offside. Television replays suggested he was level with the defender when Symons headed forward.

And so, Middlesbrough survived. They improved after the interval, marginally, but were hanging on for a draw when a quick break after a City corner caught the home defence. Festa played an important part in the move which ended with the unmarked Juninho shooting home from six yards.

"Festa broke out really well," Bryan Robson, the Middlesbrough manager, said. "He doesn't just defend. He can also come out with the ball." He also packs a mean left hook, as Lomas can testify. The Northern Ireland international was left nursing a broken nose after being on the receiving end. Festa got away with a yellow card.

MIDDLESBROUGH (5-3-1-1): B. Roberts — N. Cox, G. Festa, S. Vickers, D. Whyte, C. Fleming — C. Brightwell, P. Symons, R. Rösler, K. Juninho — F. Ravanelli. Referee: P. Jones.



Juninho: finally found space

Critics aim for easy targets and miss point

STEVE McMANAMAN



Why is it that an England defeat is inevitably followed not by serious analysis, but finger-pointing? It is so predictable, so childish in many ways, and serves absolutely no purpose whatsoever.

I struggled to find any reasonable evaluation after the defeat in our World Cup qualifier at Wembley. Even the broadsheet newspapers were largely looking to blame someone — anyone — rather than understand why we lost to Italy.

We know that we did not play as well as we are capable of and there were certain things we got wrong, but remember, it was a tight game won, with the odd goal, by a team that defended extensively for much of the match. I don't think that the Italians were brilliant and I don't think England were rubbish.

We did not win, but every single England player tried and tried and tried. In the second half, we had constant possession and, although we did not create as well as we would have liked, we certainly had more — and better — chances than Italy. What we did not have was even the remotest hint of luck. Several times in the second half, we had shots blocked on or near the goal line and did not get the run of the ball. Then there was Matt Le Tissier's header in the first half, which was an instinctive thing and could have changed things around.

Against that, the Italians produced a goal from a long ball — and even that had a huge slice of luck. Ian Walker had Zola's shot covered only for it to take a deflection off Sol Campbell that squeezed it past him into the net. On such things are international matches decided.

Afterwards, it was all "Magnificent Italians" with too much technique for the journeyman English. They were not magnificent and we will not get a thrashing in Italy. They did defend very well. As soon as they scored, they dropped off an extra ten yards and pulled nine men behind the ball. I don't care who it is you are playing — the Italians or a second division side — if they go a goal up and are determined to defend, then it is by no means easy to break them down. When defenders are as accomplished and comfortable on the ball as Italy's, it is very hard.

What we did not do was pass the ball quickly enough through the midfield. Why players like myself and Le Tissier in the side, we need quick passing to move the ball early into areas where we can damage the opposition and maybe that did not happen often enough. I'm not sure why. I was marked more or less from the start and perhaps that discouraged my team-mates from passing to me more often. There tended, instead, to be long balls for Alan Shearer to chase wide — and he was being closely marked, too.

It is frustrating, because, as I've said before, I like to receive the ball with a marker on me, because I believe I can either take him into areas where he is vulnerable, or win the foul. It's frustrating too, because for all people know — and say — I was just wandering around aimlessly, when the reality is that I was still making the runs and still taking men out of the game.

That is why I feel sorry for Le Tissier. So many people seemed intent on retribution afterwards and he bore the brunt of it. Like me, he is an easy target because he is expected to make things happen and, when they do not, the criticism is virtually pre-determined. If, as happened on Wednesday, the service is a little slow, then he has four men lining up in front of him. Is he supposed to continually beat the lot of them?

The manager was crucified for picking Le Tiss and not playing two men up front. Yet, when we did play two up against Poland, it did not really work and we were rightly criticised. When we went to Georgia, we used the same system as Wednesday night and everyone agreed that we got it right. It will be the right system in Italy too, so long as we get the passing right.

We are by no means out of it. Italy struggled at home to Georgia and they will not relish going there. Going to Poland, too, is going to be a difficult game for both teams. The defeat means we cannot afford another slip-up, but we can certainly still qualify.

I know that things will not change. If England win even when playing badly, we will be lionhearts. Lose, and we will be faint-hearts, no matter what. I just hope that a few of the critics will read the points I have made and stop to think about them.

David Powell meets an emerging triathlete being schooled for success in 2000

Gilfillan gets on her bike for Sydney

One local paper labelled her a "wonder girl" and Worcester Sports Council made her its sports-woman of the year. She appears with Chris Boardman and Ben Ainslie in a pilot television video, *A League Of Their Own*, and has been on the front cover of *Triathlete* magazine. At 17, Caris Gilfillan can barely take in what has happened to her in the past 18 months, let alone speculate about what the future might hold.

The 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, she said unhesitatingly, is a clear target and her school has taken the rare step of altering her timetable to help her to train with that goal in mind. Gilfillan is putting university on hold while dedicating herself to her great triathlon adventure, but says that it is too soon to say whether she might turn professional. "I cannot imagine it when it is just little me here thinking about all the world champions and top ten in the world," she said.

"Little me" is growing up fast. Two years ago, Gilfillan was a competitive runner and swimmer, but not a cyclist. Though hardly a beginner on a bike — "I didn't need stabilisers or anything like that," she laughed — neither had she shown an interest in racing. Then her father and brother held up the third piece of the triathlon jigsaw and Gilfillan made it fit.

"James, my brother, did a triathlon in October 1994, but I had never thought of doing one," Gilfillan said. "I did a cycling time-trial the following April because my dad used to do a lot of cycling and James had done some. Then, because I had done a time-trial, they said: 'Why don't you do a triathlon?' She could think of no excuse and, looking at her record now, it is just as well.

In 1995, within six months of her first triathlon, Gilfillan finished thirteenth in the

SPORT IN SCHOOLS

world junior B championships (under-16) in Cancun, Mexico. Last year, she won the British youth title and finished runner-up in the European championships. A useful but unexceptional swimmer and runner, she has been a revelation on wheels, winning four national cycling titles in 1996.

In the words of Elaine Shaw, the British Triathlon Association (BTA) chief executive, Gilfillan has "a voracious appetite for competition". With triathlon set for the 2000 Olympics and 2002 Commonwealth Games, Gilfillan looks a solid bet, even this far ahead, to be in the front line for selection. "She certainly has the potential for the Olympics," Shaw said.

Gilfillan's school, appreciating the fact, is supporting her. She is the only A-level student at The Chase High School, Malvern, taking two subjects rather than three. "We have adapted the timetable to suit her needs," Jane Powell, the head of PE, said. "But, if the person in question was not as dedicated as Caris, I am not sure the school would be so helpful. We try to give kids the best opportunity to achieve their maximum, in whatever it may be."

While others plan for university, Gilfillan is intent on chasing ranking points to qualify for Sydney. Triathletes will need to be in the top three of their country and top 50 in the world. "You need three A levels to go to university but I



Gilfillan's competitive instincts have helped her on the road to the Olympics. Photograph: Julian Herbert

do not want to go straight away," Gilfillan said. "I want to race abroad and pick up as many points as I can."

The 1997 targets are the European and world championships. Not only must Gilfillan cope with double the distance but also, in the case of the world championships, a significant age handicap. She has moved out of the sprint age-group into the Olympic

distance age-group, in which races are over 1,500 metres (swim), 40 kilometres (ride) and 10 kilometres (run). The world championships are for the 18 to 20 age-group. "Seventeen-year-olds are allowed to go only if their country say they are good enough," she said. If she isn't, who is?

Gilfillan came to triathlon having represented Worcestershire in swimming, cross

country and hockey, playing in goal. Ah, the easy life of a goalkeeper compared with training for triathlon. She trains twice a day, 15 hours a week, including a 60-mile ride.

The more she puts in, the more her parents take out of their bank account. Her mother estimates that £8,000 went on her daughter's triathlon needs last year. House repairs are on hold. "Once our mort-

gage is paid, and the running costs, the rest goes on triathlon," she said.

The BTA, aware that it must take triathlon into schools to fish for talent, has piloted a junior award scheme, which is likely to be launched in earnest this year, perhaps followed by a framework of schools competition. Interested parents should get their house repairs done now.

Cherry-pickers avoid golf course hazards

Jack Nicklaus, reputed to be the best golfer of all time, took nine years to earn \$1 million in prize-money. By contrast, Tiger Woods, the latest phenomenon to hit the United States Tour, reached that target in nine weeks. Even allowing for inflation, this is no mean feat.

In 1975, when the European PGA Tour emerged in its present form, prize-money for its 17 tournaments totalled £600,000. By last year that figure had grown to £30 million for a total of 37 events played in locations ranging from the Far East to Jersey. Around 200,000 spectators are expected to attend the British Open at Royal Troon this year.

The achievement of the Europeans in breaking United States dominance in the Ryder Cup fuelled the amateur game in Britain and led, briefly, to demand outstripping the number of courses available. As a result, new courses began popping up all over the country. Then came the recession and a large number of the new clubs were either sold or went into receivership. The dream that fortunes could be made was shattered.

According to Golf Research, 83 per cent of new clubs are in financial difficulty. Last year 23 clubs were sold and another 17 have the "for sale" sign up. But there are indications that things are changing. In fact, there are companies that claim to be doing very nicely, and three of them have come to the stock market during the past couple of years.

PGA European Tour Courses is the biggest of these, carrying a price tag of £39 million. It has the backing of three big players — the PGA European Tour itself, Mark McCormack's International Management Group (IMG) and David Thompson, founder of Hillsdown Holdings. Between them they hold 60 per cent of the shares.

The company came to the stock market in 1995, and has spent £4.5 million building up its prestigious portfolio of courses and management agreements across Britain and Europe. These include Collingtree Park in Northamptonshire, Stockley Park in Middlesex, Quinta Do Lago in Portugal and Portmarnock in Ireland, as well as Schloss Bittenburg in Germany.

"We see ourselves a bit like a hotel, but instead of bums on beds we are attempting to get bums on tees. Once we have achieved that we can then improve our profitability by offering those golfers the use of other extensive facilities and packages."

By encouraging the family ticket it is hoped the Nick Faldos of tomorrow will emerge. Come September and the Ryder Cup, the need for fresh talent may become all too apparent.

THE BUSINESS OF SPORT



Earlier this month it bought The Tytherington in Cheshire for £15 million from Clubpartners International, the smallest of the publicly quoted operators.

Sean Kelly, managing director of PGA Tour Courses, says there is money in golf and is confident of achieving earnings growth of at least 20 per cent per annum. For the current year brokers are forecasting pre-tax profits of £2 million.

"Our strategy has been to buy prestigious courses at the right price. In other words to acquire assets efficiently," he said. The company is aiming to hold a portfolio of 20 top courses by the end of the decade.

The failure of many clubs in recent years has provided PGA Tour Courses and its nearest rival, Clubhaus, with the opportunity to pick them up at knockdown prices.

Clubhaus operates at what Guy Buckley, a director, describes as the "family end" of the market. It is the group's intention to offer golf as part of an overall leisure package, aimed at the family as a whole rather than just the average hacker. The company operates four facilities in this country, including the impressive Duke's Dene course in Surrey, as well as two more in Germany and one in Belgium. Buckley, formerly with IMG, said: "Our objective is to establish up to 15 courses in this country over the medium term."

"We see ourselves a bit like a hotel, but instead of bums on beds we are attempting to get bums on tees. Once we have achieved that we can then improve our profitability by offering those golfers the use of other extensive facilities and packages."

By encouraging the family ticket it is hoped the Nick Faldos of tomorrow will emerge. Come September and the Ryder Cup, the need for fresh talent may become all too apparent.

MICHAEL CLARK

ICE HOCKEY

Devils warm to their mission

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CARDIFF Devils maintained their three-point lead in the Superleague with a hard-earned 4-3 away victory over Ayr Scottish Eagles in front of a capacity crowd of 2,733. A rush of goals midway through the first period saw the score go from 0-0 to 2-2 inside two minutes. Jamie Steer and Jiri Lala giving the home team a 2-0 lead with goals 20 seconds apart, only to see Ivan Matulik and the defenceman, Mike Ware, reply almost as quickly for the visitors.

The scoring rate slowed down after that, but Cardiff took over with goals by Doug McEwen and Doug McCarr-

thy in the second period. Penalties to Marty Yewchuk and Frank Evans, of Cardiff, early in the third period gave Ayr a two-man advantage, enabling Ryan Kurnaru to score and bring the margin back to a single goal, but, despite removing "Even Rampl", their goaltender, in favour of an extra forward in the final minute, they were unable to salvage a point.

Sheffield Steelers, in second place, trailed 1-0 to a first-period goal by Jonathan Weaver at home to Newcastle Cobras, but skated off 6-3 winners to keep up the sole challenge to Cardiff at the

head of the table. A goal by Ken Priestly levelled the score soon after the restart, but Mike Bodnarchuk put Newcastle ahead again before Tim Cranston, with a goal either side of the second interval, gave Sheffield the lead for the first time. Tony Hard and David Longstaff extended the margin to 5-2, but Newcastle's gamble in taking off their goaltender, Mike Rautio, with more than a minute remaining paid off when Markku Kyllonen scored his team's third. However, Frank Kovacs put the puck into the empty net nine seconds later.

ROWING

Britain toast success in Sydney

BY MIKE ROSEWELL, ROWING CORRESPONDENT

THE British delegation had every reason to celebrate this weekend after achieving total success at the Fisa Congress in Sydney, when it persuaded the Fisa council to drop its proposals to cut the number of events in the world championships from 24 to 19.

British athletes and administrators were concerned when, last August, the council of the world's governing body announced proposals to cut back the number of events, on the grounds of cost and media friendliness.

The proposals would also have biased the championships towards sculling rather

than rowing, the latter, of course, being the discipline which is more successfully undertaken by Britain internationally.

After six months of international canvassing, the British delegation of David Tanner, the international manager, Di Ellis, the Amateur Rowing Association (ARA) chairman, and Martin Brandon-Bravo, the leader and ARA President, achieved all their aims.

On a British motion, Congress agreed to maintain a 24-event programme for the world championships. The men's coxed four and coxed pair will remain, as will the

men's lightweight eight and women's lightweight pair. The only change will be the substitution of a women's lightweight quad for the former coxed four.

The British delegation was also successful in urging that Fisa addressed the rules concerning amateurism and was promised a working party report in the summer.

The Congress also agreed to retain a programme of 14 events for the next Olympic Games, although there was considerable support for a French proposal to provide four events, instead of the current three, for lightweight.

BOWLS

Biggs's six too late to save title-holders

BY DAVID RHYE JONES

A BRILLIANT count of six, conjured up by Mel Biggs, the England international, was not enough to save Wiltshire, the holders of the Liberty Trophy, from a 124-119 defeat by Nottinghamshire in the national inter-county semi-final at Wellingborough on Saturday.

Biggs was level, 15-15, with Bob Dickens after 19 ends, but scored a treble on the twentieth, and took out an enemy bowl to score six on the 21st, bringing Wiltshire within three shots of Nottinghamshire with only two ends left to play.

Nottinghamshire skips, Jamie Mills and Simon Barker, both scored singles, however, and the crisis was averted. Biggs was Wiltshire's only winning skip, but Mills, Barker, Duncan Robinson, Brett Morley and Phil Talbot returned winning cards for Nottinghamshire.

Nottinghamshire, who had never previously gone beyond the semi-final stage, will now face the winners of the semi-final between Kent and Cumbria on Saturday.

Llanelli, the 1995 champions, will face the crown green bowlers of North Wales in the final of the Welsh inter-club final next Saturday, after beating the holders, Cardiff, 123-94, in the semi-final at Ogwr.

Frith, who played at Prestatyn, won the Northern League this winter for the first time. With few flat greens north of Llandudnod Wells, they attract crown green players, many of whom cross the English border to play the level green game in winter.

SAILING: CREWS PROVIDE BOOST FOR ORGANISERS WITH BLANKET FINISH

Fanfare for the common man

BY EDWARD GORMAN SAILING CORRESPONDENT

MANY of the top racing sailors in Great Britain like to criticise the BT Global Challenge. To them, it is little more than a "round-the-world soap opera" for inexperienced amateurs, which harms the image of racing sailing, while at the same time commands unjustifiably large amounts of sponsorship and coverage by the media.

The 1996-97 race has already demonstrated, however, that, as a sporting event, it has every right to its prominent position. With one-design yachts and crew selection carefully geared to ensuring that no boat has an unfair advantage, the Challenge has turned out to be every bit as close-fought and competitive as its professional equivalents.

What does it matter that the overall skill level is lower than, say, in a Whitbread Round the World Race, so

long as everyone starts on the same footing, which is clearly the case. The race offers a refreshingly unprofessionalised sporting spectacle, featuring ordinary people.

This weekend the crews and skippers have done the talking for Chay Blyth, the race founder and director, who is tireless in its defence. After sailing 1,250 miles across the Tasman Sea from Wellington, the 14-strong fleet arrived in Sydney with just six hours separating first from last.

After what, for many of the crews, had been a week-long match race with their closest rivals on the water, the 67-foot steel cutters carved their way into Sydney Harbour yesterday, with, in some cases, only minutes separating them. It was a thrilling exhibition of one-design racing. So hectic were the arrivals that the customs were overwhelmed and several crews had to stand off while those ahead were processed.

BT Global Challenge

The leg winner was Andy Hindley's *Save The Children*, which crossed the line 2hr 18min ahead of Mike Golding, on *Group 4*, who thus failed in his dream of posting three leg wins in a row. Just an hour later came a complete surprise — *Courtaulds International*, the slow-coach of the fleet to date, who improved nine places in 12 hours with a storming finish.

Courtaulds, skippered by Boris Webber, and *Save The Children* benefited from plotting a course well to the north of the main fleet.

Although Golding did not have to endure the kind of agonisingly slow finish that he experienced in Rio and Wel-

lington, he nevertheless saw his cherished lead obliterated by Hindley in the final stretch. A message from *Group 4* while still at sea underlined the tension on board.

"With *Concert* and *Toshiba Wave Warrior* now on the horizon, the pressure has increased beyond belief," the crew reported. "Over the past few hours a concertina effect has been seen across the whole fleet. Spanning some 91 miles this morning, we are now spread across 68 miles with just two or three miles separating the first 11 yachts. Now it is just a matter of 'grunting-up', as skipper Mike Golding would say."

Among the closest finishers were *Pause To Remember*, *Concert* and *3Com*, who were fifth, sixth and seventh, respectively, but spread over only 1½ minutes. *Heath Insured II*, which held the early lead, finished in twelfth, with the disabled crew on *Time & Tide* last, after a leg where sail changes were frequent.

With three legs completed and a two-week rest before the restart for the voyage to Cape Town, Golding has slightly improved his hold on the event and now has an overall lead of around 18 hours over *Toshiba* and *Save The Children*, who are just 43 minutes apart. With 32 hours to *Motorola*, in fourth, overall honours still look like coming from the first three.

RESULT: 1. *Save The Children* 7days 07hr 32min. 2. *Group 4* 7days 09hr 44min. 3. *Courtaulds International* 7days 10hr 51min. 4. *Global Teamwork* 7days 11hr 05min. 5. *Pause To Remember* 7days 11hr 17min. 6. *Concert* 7days 11hr 22min. 7. *3Com* 7days 11hr 23min. 8. *Ocean Rover* 7days 11hr 33min. 9. *Nuclear Electric* 7days 11hr 35min. 10. *Toshiba Wave Warrior* 7days 11hr 39min. 11. *Motorola* 7days 11hr 44min. 12. *Heath Insured II* 7days 12hr 01min. 13. *Commercial Union* 7days 12hr 55min. 14. *Time & Tide* 7days 13hr 19min.



Save The Children sails towards the Sydney Opera House at the end of the stage

Diary, page 18

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Ronald Gribble samples the thrills and spills of a skiing course in the French Alps for late starters

Hands, skis and booms-a-daisy

The first sight that caught my eye as our coach climbed the road towards the St Gervais ski region in the French Alps was a sleek white Citroën ambulance speeding down the mountain, its blue light flashing.

Another bad omen, I thought. On the previous two weekends during lessons on my local dry ski slope, two people had been injured: one twisted a knee and the other fractured a wrist.

I had booked a week's beginner's ski course for grown-ups, where I could take my tumblers in mature company, away from the laughing eyes of twentysomethings half my age, and in the hope of achieving a longstanding ambition: to ski the slopes and be able to bluff my way through those after-dinner skiing holiday conversations.

Our hotel, La Belle Etolie, in Le Bettez, was in a magnificent setting at the foot of Mont Blanc, with a nursery slope and ski lift outside the front door. We were fitted with our boots and skis in the hotel's ski workshop that Saturday evening and met at the door by our French instructors first thing next morning.

We were a motley party of 20 men and women aged from about 30 to a sprightly 76 and divided into three groups: beginners, intermediates and advanced intermediates.

They say that everyone falls in love with their ski instructor. Marielle was a pretty, bronzed brunette with an infectious smile and dressed in a bright red ski suit. "Rem, benz zee knees," she would purr, wagging a finger when I did not follow her instructions and ended up in a pile of snow.

She taught us to keep our balance by leaning forward in our ski boots, great hulks of plastic padded with foam, with fierce snap fasteners, that felt, at first, like lead weights.

The skiing position is very simple. Your natural instinct, however, is to stand in a stiff, semi-sitting position, bottom stuck out, when, in fact, you should adopt a relaxed standing position, arms forward, with the knees slightly bent.

Marielle had a good sense of humour. She needed it. No sooner had she picked one of us up, than another fell down. "Rem! Are you listening to me?" she would scold, flashing her big brown eyes. "Stop looking at your skis. Look where you are going. You are a dandy on the slopes."

I took extra advice from the 76-year-old in our party, a veteran skier, who had made his first pair of skis out of wood as a boy in the Thirties: "Fix a point with your eyes and almost throw yourself at it," he said. "If you are leaning forward, you can't fall over. If you lean back, your skis will slide from under you."

The writer with instructor Marielle who did her best to teach him to ski

He was right, of course, but if my speed became too fast and I lost my nerve, my instinct was to sit down.

Marielle persevered. She taught us how to do snow ploughs by stretching the legs wide apart and holding the skis in a triangular position with the tips almost touching at the front to slow our speed.

On the Monday we mastered the button lift, a long pole with a plate-sized seat that you put between your legs to allow yourself to be dragged up slopes with your skis sliding along in the snow.

Marielle took us to an almost deserted valley where we learnt to do slow parallel turns — "S" shaped loops in the snow. She showed us how to turn by putting our weight on our downhill ski and sliding our other ski in the direction we wanted to go, transferring our weight to make the turn.

Over our lunchtime soup



came the news that Grace, one of the advanced intermediates, had broken a leg in the mountains and was being brought down by sledge. The ambulance stopped at the hotel on the way to hospital to collect her insurance details. We all remembered to take our insurance cards the next time we went out on the slopes.

When a knee started to hurt later that afternoon I decided to call it a day and return to the hotel for a hot bath — an instant cure, I discovered, for twisted limbs, tired muscles, aches and bruises.

Even after ski school, when we practised alone, Marielle kept an eye on us from afar, pointing out any bad habits. "Denez," she shouted one afternoon to Dennis, a member of our party: "You've your boots on the wrong feet!"

On the Tuesday we took the télécabine, a small cable car, to the Avenue du Mont D'Arbois and skied down a green (easy) piste. Easy for experienced skiers, perhaps, but for us it was like descending Everest.

At one stage we skied into thick mist and my spectacles

steamed up. There was a sheer drop on one side, but we got down without mishap. That evening we heard that Grace had had a plate fitted in her leg and would be in hospital for the rest of the week.

On the Wednesday, as I travelled up a mountain on a rather jerky button lift, I stopped concentrating for a split second halfway up to admire the view and fell off. Scaling a steep slope in ski suit, ski boots and hot sunshine is no joke and I arrived at the top in a lather. I never fell off a button lift again.

We beginners progressed at varying speeds. When Jenny and Pam began to lose their confidence on the higher slopes Marielle gave them personal tuition. Meanwhile, Steve and Julian, the thirtysomethings, seemed to be getting very daring.

The sensation of skiing downhill on my first steep run was terrifyingly thrilling. Schussing — skiing in a straight line — makes you pick up speed and I was never quite sure whether I was completely in control and going to get out of it alive.

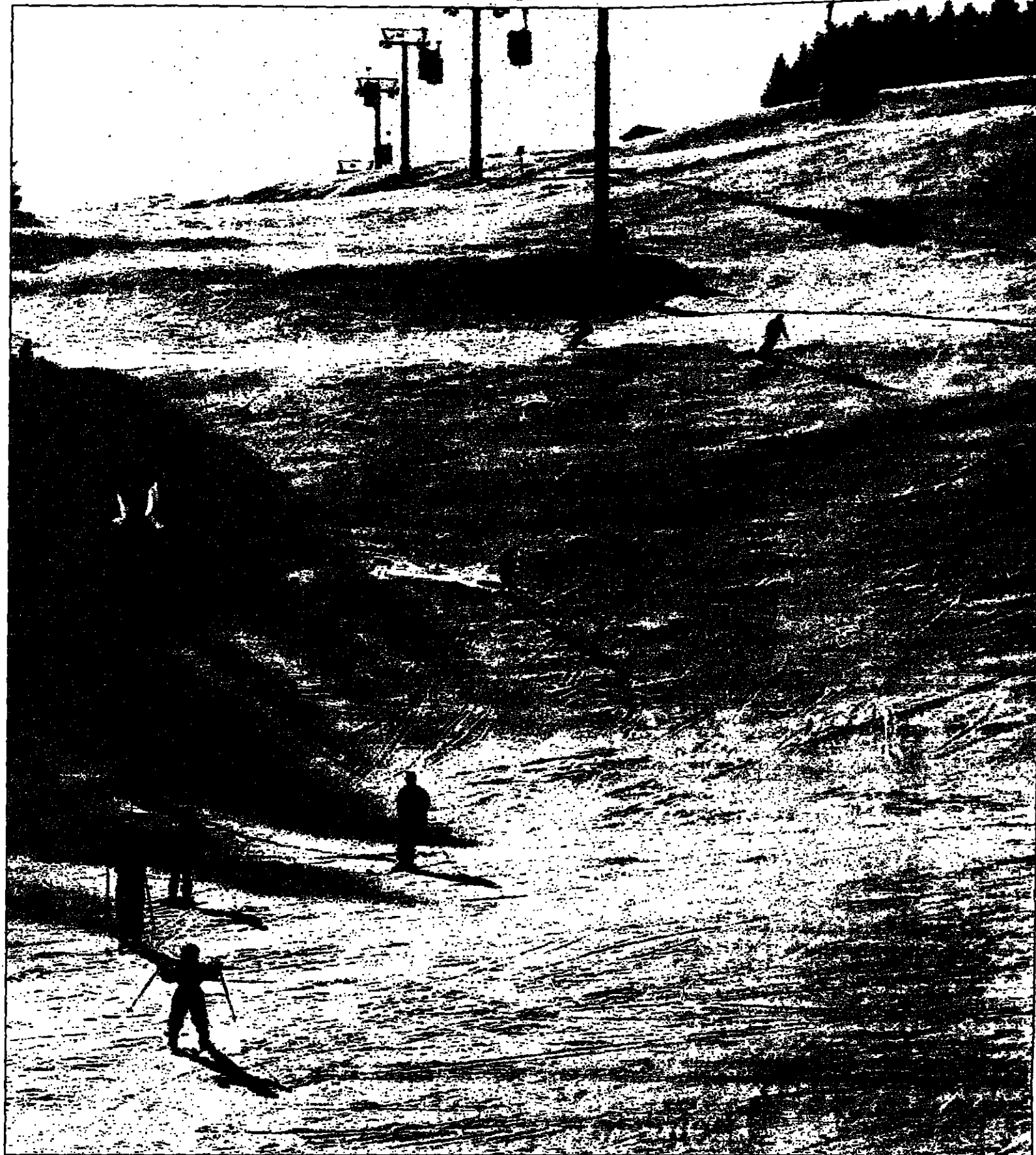
Thursday was a bad day. Pam and Jenny quit halfway through the morning lesson when Marielle informed us that we were to ski back to the hotel via a rather icy blue (harder) run. I careened off the piste and ended up in soft snow with my stick buried up to its handle. We were told later that a skier on a black run (the hardest) had died that afternoon when he hit a tree. My injuries amounted to a bruised hip and elbow.

At dinner we heard that Grace's handsome French ski instructor had made three visits to see her in the hospital. Could this be her lucky break?

On Friday, during our last lesson, Dennis shot off the piste, crashed down an embankment on to the edge of a forest and disappeared under a large fir tree. Marielle looked pale as she raced to his rescue. "Denez, Denez, are you OK?" she called into the foliage. "Let me count everything and I'll let you know," he replied, spitting twigs and leaves from his mouth.

I decided to make the most of the last afternoon and took the cable car to the foot of Mont Joux where I could take a button lift and practise skiing down a long piste over and over again. I was enjoying myself when I was overtaken by a rescue team with an injured skier on a stretcher. They stopped on a ridge and radioed for a helicopter. By the time the drama was over it was too late to get the cable car back to the hotel.

"Take that green piste signposted St Gervais. It's easy," said a Frenchman stationed at a first-aid hut. Half



Cable cars glide above skiers on the slopes at Le Bettez. "I was never quite sure whether I was completely in control and going to get out of it alive"

an hour and a couple of tumbles later I could see the rooftops of Le Bettez below. Two pistes seemed to merge and I found myself on a steep run with a slalom banner across the finishing line.

"I was just about to put my boots on and come to look for you," said Dick, our holiday rep, rather worried. "You're the last back." I explained about the helicopter rescue and my route back. "I hear that you are partially colour blind," Dick said. "That last part was a red [difficult] run."

When I got home, my father phoned to make sure I had returned in one piece. "Skiing sounds a bit risky to me," he said. "By the way, I've got some bad news. Your brother fell over on a business trip while you were away and broke his arm in two places."

● The author travelled with HF Holidays, Imperial House, Edgware Road, London, NW9 5AL (brochure 0181-905 9388, reservations 0181-905 9388). It is running ski courses for beginners at Le Bettez from March 8. ● The cost for half-board, ski, boots, ski school and ski pass is £668.

SKIING

- GO to a local dry ski slope to learn the basics. Private tuition costs about £25 an hour. Group lessons are cheaper and more fun.
- TAKE a ski jacket and salopettes. Separates are better than a ski suit because you can take the jacket off if you get hot. Ski gloves are a must. A bobble hat is useful. Thermals are optional. Cotton polo neck jumpers and sweatshirts can be just as warm.
- TAKE sunblock for your face and tips. Take sunglasses. Goggles can steam up.
- TAKE a first-aid kit. Composed skin repair plasters are recommended in case boots rub and for blisters.
- TAKE a bum bag to carry essential money, sunscreen and your insurance card.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

When a competent defender voluntarily offers declarer an alternative line of play which would not otherwise be available, it is unlikely to be a winning line. This is a case in point, from the EBU Northern Pairs in Risley.

Dealer South North-South game Matchpointed pairs

♠ K97652 ♠ 103
♥ J74 ♥ 2
♦ A J 66 ♦ J9652
♣ A84 ♣ Q10742

Contract: Four Hearts by South. Lead: King of diamonds

West (Tom Townsend) led two top diamonds, and East played the two and five, showing an odd number. Had West switched, declarer would have had no choice but to draw trumps, making eleven tricks when spades turned out to be 2-2.

Despairing of the defence's chances of a trick in the black suits, West continued with a third diamond. This gave declarer the losing option of ruffing with dummy's jack of hearts, offloading his potentially losing third spade from hand. A priori, a 3-1 or 4-0 spade break is much more likely than a 4-1 or 5-0 heart break: approximately 59 per cent against 32 per cent. On this reasoning declarer greedily accepted the ruff-and-discard. Thus he had to lose a trick in trumps, and give the

defence a vital third trick (every trick is vital at matchpointed pairs).

Declarer's choice of play was somewhat insulting to West, as well as unsuccessful. Seeing potential for a spade trick, but no prospects in trumps, West would hardly have been co-operative enough to play a third diamond. □ David Muller organises an Under-19's bridge club at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club. Activities include Duplicate Bridge Pairs, Minibridge Pairs, and supervised practice. The next meetings are on February 23 and March 15. Details: D Muller on 0181-952 2936; Young Chelsea Bridge Club on 0171-373 1665. □ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

By Philip Howard

PIS ALLER
a. An ant
b. A makeshift
c. An alley for boules

ENGASTRIMYTH
a. A mythical monster
b. A ventriloquist
c. A stomach ulcer

FUGLEMAN
a. A drill sergeant
b. The rearward
c. A backgammon piece

TURDIFORM
a. The bottom class
b. Like a thrush
c. An irregular tetragon

Answers on page 40

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Polgar's reverse

Judit Polgar, the chess prodigy from Budapest, amazed the chess community by sweeping into an early lead in the super-tournament in Linas in Spain. Amongst her victims was Vassily Ivanchuk, ranked in the world's top six and considered by many as a potential future world champion. Nevertheless, as we saw last week, Polgar, playing with the traditionally disadvantageous black pieces, smashed Ivanchuk's resistance in a mere 19 moves.

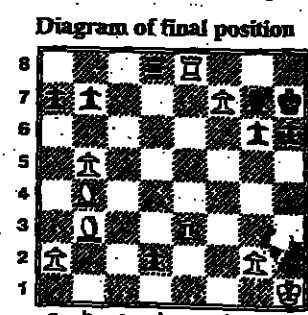
The first setback for Polgar came in the seventh round, when she had to face Vladimir Kramnik, the highly talented Russian grandmaster. Although she appeared to emerge from the opening with a more than satisfactory position, with two highly mobile central pawns, she overplayed her hand and allowed Kramnik to transpose into a winning endgame.

White: Vladimir Kramnik
Black: Judit Polgar
Linas, February 1997

King's Indian Defence

1 Nf3 Nf6
2 d4 g6
3 Nc3 Bg7
4 d4 d6
5 e4 e5
6 Bc2 exd4
7 O-O Nc6
8 d5 Ne7
9 Bf4 Nf5
10 Re1 Bc5
11 Ng5 Nf6
12 Bf3 c6
13 Bg3 cxd5
14 cxd5

15 Ne6 Bb6
16 dxc6 bxc6
17 Nxd4 Nxd4
18 Bxd4 Bc5
19 Bc2 e4
20 Re1 d4
21 Bc2 e3
22 Bb3 d3
23 Bb5 Qd6
24 Qg4 Bc5
25 Rf1 Qg3
26 Kh1 Qg3
27 Qd4 Qc5
28 Rf7 Rf7
29 e4+ Kh7
30 Qe5 Bc5
31 Rf4 Bc6
32 Re5 Ne5
33 f5 Bf8
34 Rf4 Bf8
35 Re4 Bg7
36 Bb4 d2
37 Rb5 Rb8
38 Re5 Black resigns

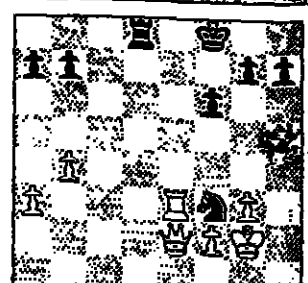


Linas
With one round to go in Linas, Kasparov and Kramnik share the lead with 7½ points out of ten. These two must face each other in the final round and their battle will decide the outcome of first place.

□ Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Godes — Baburin, Jerusalem 1996. Although Black is a piece ahead, it appears that White should regain it thanks to his pin on the knight. How did Black prove that this is not the case?



Solution on page 40

807 1/4	1	8.2	7.8
807 1/2	1 1/2	8.1	7.4
808	2	8.1	7.5
808 1/2	2 1/2	8.0	7.4
809	3	8.0	7.3
809 1/2	3 1/2	7.9	7.2
810	4	7.9	7.1
810 1/2	4 1/2	7.8	7.0
811	5	7.8	6.9
811 1/2	5 1/2	7.7	6.8
812	6	7.7	6.7
812 1/2	6 1/2	7.6	6.6
813	7	7.6	6.5
813 1/2	7 1/2	7.5	6.4
814	8	7.5	6.3
814 1/2	8 1/2	7.4	6.2
815	9	7.4	6.1
815 1/2	9 1/2	7.3	6.0
816	10	7.3	5.9
816 1/2	10 1/2	7.2	5.8
817	11	7.2	5.7
817 1/2	11 1/2	7.1	5.6
818	12	7.1	5.5
818 1/2	12 1/2	7.0	5.4
819	13	7.0	5.3
819 1/2	13 1/2	6.9	5.2
820	14	6.9	5.1
820 1/2	14 1/2	6.8	5.0
821	15	6.8	4.9
821 1/2	15 1/2	6.7	4.8
822	16	6.7	4.7
822 1/2	16 1/2	6.6	4.6
823	17	6.6	4.5
823 1/2	17 1/2	6.5	4.4
824	18	6.5	4.3
824 1/2	18 1/2	6.4	4.2
825	19	6.4	4.1
825 1/2	19 1/2	6.3	4.0
826	20	6.3	3.9
826 1/2	20 1/2	6.2	3.8
827	21	6.2	3.7
827 1/2	21 1/2	6.1	3.6
828	22	6.1	3.5
828 1/2	22 1/2	6.0	3.4
829	23	6.0	3.3
829 1/2	23 1/2	5.9	3.2
830	24	5.9	3.1
830 1/2	24 1/2	5.8	3.0
831	25	5.8	2.9
831 1/2	25 1/2	5.7	2.8
832	26	5.7	2.7
832 1/2	26 1/2	5.6	2.6
833	27	5.6	2.5
833 1/2	27 1/2	5.5	2.4
834	28	5.5	2.3
834 1/2	28 1/2	5.4	2.2
835	29	5.4	2.1
835 1/2	29 1/2	5.3	2.0
836	30	5.3	1.9
836 1/2	30 1/2	5.2	1.8
837	31	5.2	1.7
837 1/2	31 1/2	5.1	1.6
838	32	5.1	1.5
838 1/2	32 1/2	5.0	1.4
839	33	5.0	1.3
839 1/2	33 1/2	4.9	1.2
840	34	4.9	1.1
840 1/2	34 1/2	4.8	1.0
841	35	4.8	.9
841 1/2	35 1/2	4.7	.8
842	36	4.7	.7
842 1/2	36 1/2	4.6	.6
843	37	4.6	.5
843 1/2	37 1/2	4.5	.4
844	38	4.5	.3
844 1/2	38 1/2	4.4	.2
845	39	4.4	.1
845 1/2	39 1/2	4.3	.0
846	40	4.3	.0
846 1/2	40 1/2	4.2	.0
847	41	4.2	.0
847 1/2	41 1/2	4.1	.0
848	42	4.1	.0
848 1/2	42 1/2	4.0	.0
849	43	4.0	.0
849 1/2	43 1/2	3.9	.0
850	44	3.9	.0
850 1/2	44 1/2	3.8	.0
851	45	3.8	.0
851 1/2	45 1/2	3.7	.0
852	46	3.7	.0
852 1/2	46 1/2	3.6	.0
853	47	3.6	.0
853 1/2	47 1/2	3.5	.0
854	48	3.5	.0
854 1/2	48 1/2	3.4	.0
855	49	3.4	.0
855 1/2	49 1/2	3.3	.0
856	50	3.3	.0
856 1/2	50 1/2	3.2	.0
857	51	3.2	.0
857 1/2	51 1/2	3.1	.0

RESULTS AND STATISTICS

TODAY

Interim: Allied Carpets, Jupiter Geared Capital & Income Trust, Regent Inns, Second Alliance Trust, Anglo & Overseas Property, Low & Bonar, Trust of Investment Company, Updown Investment Company, Economic statistics: US stock and bond markets closed.

TOMORROW

Interim: John Haggas, Macro 4, Fimela, Barclays, Irish Permanent, People's Therapeutics, St. Modwen Properties, Sedgwick, SmithKline Beecham, Stadium Group, Economic statistics: UK PSBR (January), Bundesbank call for repos, Italian producer price index (December), BTM/Schroder-Wertheim weekly US chain store sales report, US Treasury auction of short-term T-bills, US Treasury announces size of short-term T-bills, API weekly oil supply statistics.

WEDNESDAY

Interim: none scheduled, Fimela China Investment Company, Kleinwort Overseas, London Forfeiting, Medway, Fimela, Rights & Issues Investment Trust, WPP Group, Economic statistics: UK retail sales (January), US consumer prices (January), US trade deficit (December).

THURSDAY

Interim: Bolton Group International, Fimela, Gifford, Shin, Chubb, St. Modwen Properties, City Site Estates, Gifford, Easynet Group, Provident Financial, Rank Group, Economic statistics: UK motor vehicle production (January), UK building societies net new commitments (January), UK provisional M4 money supply (January), Bundesbank central council meeting, US weekly jobs claims, US housing starts (January).

FRIDAY

Interim: Allied Leisure, VDC, Fimela: none scheduled, Economic statistics: UK CBI industrial confidence survey, UK provisional GDP (Q4).

SUNDAY TIPS

The Sunday Times: Buy Rolls-Royce, Rascal, SmithKline Beecham, Dagenham Motors, Bryant, Avoid Kenwood, Dalgely, The Sunday Telegraph: Buy Alfred McAlpine, Telewest Communications, Thistle Hotels, Jeyes Group, Mail on Sunday: Buy Jardinerie Interiors, Hold Pemberton, Chubb Security, Sell Cairn Energy, British Borneo, Westmount Energy.

Rank in need of fresh impetus



Andrew Teare, chief executive of Rank. He faces the task of selling Xerox stake

RANK GROUP: Full-year figures on Thursday will come under close scrutiny from the market following December's trading update that forced brokers to downgrade their profit estimates yet again.

It was the nature of the profits warning that upset the City. The group made it clear that there were problems at its Hard Rock chain of restaurants, which had been seen by many as the driving force for Rank's future earnings growth. The figures under review are unlikely to reveal much improvement in the state of play at Hard Rock. The business has been undergoing a heavy refurbishment programme in the face of increased competition.

Group profits are expected to grow by around 10 per cent, from £22.2 million to £24.8 million, while earnings growth is likely to be down 5 per cent, at 22.8p.

Other tasks facing the group, whose chief executive is Andrew Teare, are the sale of its remaining stake in Rank Xerox and the problem of returning some of the proceeds to shareholders. At the same time, the Rank management must face up to the task of finding a way to grow the rest of the business once the sale of Rank Xerox has been completed.

In the meantime, shareholders will be rewarded with a 5 per cent increase in the payout, from 15.75p to 16.5p net.

SMITHKLINE BEECHAM: A strong performance by its US pharmaceutical division should provide another useful increase in earnings when the group unveils full-year figures tomorrow.

According to NatWest Securities, the broker, they should show pre-tax profits up 15 per cent, from £1.36 billion to £1.56 billion, while earnings climb 11 per cent, to 37.6p.

The pharmaceutical side will provide the main thrust to those earnings following a strong final quarter in 1996. Sales of Paxil/Seroxat, the anti-depressant treatment, and Augmentin, its antibiotic

treatment, will alone account for 36 per cent of total sales. Paxil has been aggressively grabbing market share in the United States, with prescriptions up around 35 per cent in the final three months.

Shareholders are likely to be rewarded by a 10 per cent increase in the payout, to 15.8p.

BARCLAYS: The bank is expected to unveil pre-tax profits of around £2.4 billion tomorrow after another solid performance in 1996 when the shares comfortably outpaced the 11.7 per cent rise in the FT All-Share Index. Analysts at Salomon Brothers have trimmed their profit forecast, albeit modestly, on the as-

sumption of a less rewarding second half for BZW, the group's investment banking arm, than had previously been assumed.

BZW enjoyed a good first half, chipping in a 23 per cent increase in operating profits to £157 million, on the back of significantly higher trading activities and fee-based businesses. Personnel changes in BZW's fixed income department may also have added to costs. At the half-year stage last August, Barclays surprised the City with a £470 million share buyback after announcing a 15 per cent rise in profits to £1.3 billion. The speculation is that Barclays could have as much as £600 million in hand to repeat the

share buyback exercise this week, or alternatively the money could be used for some other capital management programme.

MEDEVA: The fast-growing pharmaceutical group is likely to report further solid progress on Wednesday when it unveils full-year figures. They are expected to show pre-tax profits up £20 million, to £99 million, an increase of 25 per cent. Earnings growth will be a more modest 17 per cent, at 19.3p, while shareholders should enjoy a 20 per cent increase in the payout to 4.8p.

Once again the main drive to profitability will come from Metaphen, its treatment for attention deficit hyper-

activity disorder. But analysts are also looking for a revival in sales of Isonamin, the anti-obesity treatment, which had been experiencing a slowdown in prescription-related sales during the second half.

Strong sales are also expected from its vaccine division where sales of Fluvirin, its 'flu vaccine, will have been boosted by the withdrawal of an American competitor from the marketplace. Brokers estimate that sales will have grown last year by around 13 per cent, to £25 million. The acquisition of Rochester from Rhône-Poulenc Rorer, and the subsequent £65 million provision, should underpin the group's 33 per cent operating margins. Strong growth from Tussionex should support a £32 million first-time sales contribution from Rochester.

SEDGWICK: Full-year figures tomorrow will be overshadowed by last week's warning from its rival, Willis Corroon, about current trading. The City is looking for the insurance broker to increase pre-tax profits by around £8 million, to £98 million, a rise of almost 10 per cent. But earnings will be down 7 per cent, at 11.9p, reflecting continuing depressed trading. As a result, the dividend is likely to be pegged at 6.5p.

The market is likely to pay close attention to the January renewal season but rates will probably have remained weak although some increase in brokerage fees is expected in the current year. But, as NatWest points out, any top-line progress that is likely to have been made will be primarily in lower-margin business.

WPP: The advertising group is expected to report a rise in pre-tax profits to £150 million in 1996, from £114 million in the previous year. The company, which owns JWT and Ogilvy & Mather, two of the best-known brands in global advertising, has benefited from strong revenues in America, supported by the US Presidential election and the Olympic Games in Atlanta.

JANET BUSH

Governors take the stand

The first notable event of the British economic week is today's testimony before the Treasury Select Committee by Eddie George and Howard Davies, Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank of England. After last week's *Inflation Report*, the current views of the Bank on inflation and interest rates are well known, but these sessions often throw up some interesting nuances. For euro-watchers, there is also a meeting of European finance ministers in Brussels.

January figures for public borrowing are published tomorrow. The market consensus, as compiled by

MMS International, is for a net repayment of borrowing or a negative public sector borrowing requirement (PSBR) of £3.4 billion. January is a major month for corporation tax receipts. December recorded a PSBR of £2.1 billion. On Wednesday, the minutes of the January monthly monetary meeting are released. It is obvious that the Chancellor refused to raise rates in the face of Bank of England advice to the contrary, but the markets will still be fascinated to

see whether Mr George pressed for a half-point rise in base rates, as opposed to a quarter, as he threatened to do at the December meeting. Also on Wednesday, January retail sales figures are published. The market consensus is for a modest rise of 0.2 per cent after the fall of 0.8 per

cent recorded in December. The rise in January would take year-on-year growth in sales volumes to 3.8 per cent, from 2.8 per cent in December. On Thursday, a raft of bank and building society lending figures are published for January along with M4 broad money supply. On Friday, revised figures for fourth-quarter gross domestic product are due and are expected to show growth unchanged from preliminary figures at 0.8 per cent in the quarter. This gives

year-on-year growth of 2.6 per cent. In America, the main focus will continue to be prospects for inflation and the markets will be very keen to see January's consumer price figures on Wednesday. Given the strong rise in the dollar, there will also be great interest in US trade figures for December, also on Wednesday. In Germany interest will centre on Thursday's Bundesbank council meeting, which should be preceded by the latest Ifo survey, expected to show that export optimism has improved.

JANET BUSH

Scholl takes step towards total control of its brand

By ERIC REGULY

SCHOLL, the footwear and footwear company, is ready to take the first step in its campaign to take control of the brand outside Europe by acquiring the Scholl operations in Latin America. The company also wants to buy the rights to the Scholl name in North America.

The Latin American purchase is expected to be completed by the end of the month. The business is small — its annual turnover is about \$10 million compared with about £220 million at the British company — but its owners are expected to demand a relatively high price because the operations are profitable and growing quickly.

Acquiring the Scholl operations in North and South America would give the British company a platform to attack other overseas markets. It would also lead to economies of scale. The three Scholl companies in Europe and in the Americas have no equity links and rarely co-operate with each other. They have been separate entities since 1988, when Schering-Plough, the American pharmaceutical group, jettisoned Scholl's international operations, but retained the Scholl company in North America.

Stuart Wallis, former chief executive of Fisons who became Scholl's chairman last year, and Colin Brown, chief

executive, would not comment on the South American deal. But they confirmed they are keen to take control of the brand around the world.

Mr Wallis has already approached Schering-Plough with proposals to forge transatlantic links between the groups. The ideas floated have included the outright purchase of the US business, which has annual turnover of about \$200 million, and merging the two groups.

Schering's apparent reluctance to accept comes as speculation mounts that Schering is a takeover target. SmithKline Beecham, the Anglo-American drugs company, has been mentioned as a possible suitor.

Scholl wants to expand overseas now that a £30 billion restructuring it unveiled in September, has been largely completed. The shares have since climbed by about 50 per cent to 300p. The latest restructuring, including the disposal of non-core products such as cosmetics, and the rationalisation of the European warehousing and retailing operations, was triggered in 1995 by the arrival of rebel shareholders.

The UK Active Value Fund said the group was unfocused and mismanaged. The fund invested in Scholl at 178p and now owns about 5 per cent of the company.

Pilot ready to renew defiance of £48m bid

By GAVIN LUMSDEN

PILOT Investment Trust will this week renew its defence against a hostile £48 million takeover bid by Scottish Value Management's Undervalued Assets Trust (UAT).

UAT is offering seven new shares for nine shares in Pilot, which is managed by Rutherford Asset Management, and 33p for its warrants. UAT said that it had the support of institutions holding 28.8 per cent of Pilot's ordinary shares and 17.4 per cent of its warrants.

Pilot, which invests in fledgling stocks, has languished at the bottom of its sector since its launch four years ago and its shares traded on a 17 per cent discount to net asset value. Its total return on net assets has been just 5.58 per cent.

Colin McLean, managing director of SVM, said that

Pilot had erred in focusing on companies capitalised under £30 million. The offer gave Pilot shareholders a 5.4 per cent uplift in value and an 8.6 per cent increase in income, he went on. If successful, the bid would boost UAT's assets to £173 million.

The board of Pilot immediately rejected the offer. Peter Webb, investment director at Rutherford, who was recruited from Thomson Asset Management last summer, said that it was opportunistic, ignored recent improved performance and would be vigorously opposed.

However, the bid puts Rutherford in the spotlight. There is speculation that it — or its two other trusts, Beacon and Eagle — could now become takeover targets as well.

Sarah Cunningham on the next supermarket revolution

Shopping for couch potatoes

When supermarket bosses are not worrying about price wars, food safety, loyalty cards and in-store banking, they like to settle down and have a good fret about the fact that many of their customers would rather not visit their stores at all.

Faced with evidence that a lot of people are either disinclined or too busy to go on regular trips to supermarkets, Tesco and J Sainsbury, the two largest groups, have launched separate trials of home shopping. Satisfied with what they have seen so far, both plan to extend the trials next month.

The Tesco scheme, which allows shoppers to use a catalogue, a CD-Rom or the Internet, was launched at its store in Osterley, West London, and is about to be extended to stores at Hamersmith, Leeds, Romford, Lee Valley and Sutton. The main Sainsbury's trial, which is based on a tailor-made shopping list for each customer, is being run at stores in Watford and Solihull.

It may seem strange for companies that have spent fortunes building supermarkets around the country to encourage their customers to stay away. The risk was highlighted by a survey published last week by Healey & Baker, the property agents showing that about 16 per cent of the money now spent on groceries — £8 billion a year — could go to home deliveries and "drive-through" stores.

Ken Towle, who leads the Tesco Direct project, is sceptical. "Even if you are optimistic, it [home shopping] could take 5 per cent of volume in the next five years and perhaps 10

per cent in 20 years." Mr Towle points out that it is now difficult to get planning permission to build new supermarkets and that many of those built are already overcrowded. "I can't see supermarkets ever being anything other than valuable bits of real estate," he says. Taking a different approach to encouraging reluctant supermarket shoppers, and in a way that will certainly not damage the value of its real estate, Tesco is planning a selective trial of all-night opening from Friday morning to Saturday evening. Maureen Mitchell, who heads Consumer Direct at Sainsbury's, reckons that the penetration by home shopping could be around 20 per cent of householders over the next ten years. It is thought that manufacturers could develop similar services, cutting out the middle men and stealing supermarket customers.

Mr Towle has been surprised by some of the findings of the Osterley trial, which has involved several hundred customers. For example, the presumption that people would only want to order bulk goods like tins of pet food, washing powder and the like has not turned out to be true. Fresh food is also popular, and so far most people using the scheme have not tended to go to local shops to top up on fresh produce, dairy products and bread. If this pattern proves to be consistent at the other stores to be included in the trial, it will be bad news for the smaller supermarket chains and for independent shops.

Somerfield, the former Gateway, is one "neighbourhood" chain that prides itself on its fresh food and which expects to benefit if people stop going automatically to supermarkets to buy all their weekly provisions. Under the Tesco trial, half the people involved have chosen to use the catalogue, which contains about 2,500 products, and to phone or fax their orders. The rest have used the more high-tech approaches, which allow them to order from more than 20,000 products. They can either use a CD-Rom catalogue to compile a list and then e-mail it to the store, or they can use the Tesco Direct website. The goods ordered are delivered to customers at

home for a flat fee of £5. The trial is being extended because "we need to know that there is nothing unique or strange about Osterley. We need to understand critical mass and see how costs are shaping up," Mr Towle said.

Sainsbury's is also developing, along with Hewlett Packard, a way of allowing people to order from the Internet and hopes to extend the trial later this year. It is currently being tested at Hewlett Packard's UK headquarters on its internal system. The problem with the Internet is that it tends to slow down in the afternoon when people in the United States log on. But once the Internet becomes available through cable providers, it should become much faster.

Sainsbury's has been involved with Flanagan's Supermarket Direct service since October 1995, but it emphasises that it only acts as a supplier to Flanagan's, which delivers the goods to customers in southwest London.

For David Sainsbury, chairman of the supermarket group, the separate trial it is running in Watford and Solihull is a far more interesting development. Customers can go to those stores with a member of staff and draw up personal shopping lists. They can then order whenever they like from that list and go to the store to pick them up that day at a charge of £2 per time. "The key to this is that it is driven by customer needs and the point is to get and keep new customers," Mr Sainsbury said.

Asda and Sainsbury are not yet experimenting with home shopping, but it is safe to assume that it will not be long.

Flanagan's home delivery

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CHANGING TIMES

مذا من لاصل

Presswork, the manager-owned seatbelts and airbags supplier, has kept its independence through a £10 million re-engineered buyout backed by Gresham Trust. Pictured are (from left) Richard Ingram, of Hewitson Beeke & Shaw, the law firm; Ree White, Presswork managing director; Peter Brooks, of Gresham; and Denis Mullan, of accountant Ernst & Young

brief to establish a "casual dining" business. However, it is understood that his interest in Welcome Break is separate from his part-time role at Queensborough.

Other Welcome Break bidders have included Asda — believed to have offered about £400 million — and Civen, the venture capital company

FRASER NELSON

18722.00 (+854.96)

1996/97					1996/97					1996/97				
High	Low	Mkt cap (millions)	Price	Why	Yld	P/E	High	Low	Mkt cap (millions)	Price	Why	Yld	P/E	
			per share	+/-	%							%		
159	117	11.90	AFL Systems	119	-	...	74	49	6.94	Jun	81	+	...	
155	100	21.70	AMCO Corp	152	...	4.1	9	2	4.81	Int Group	3	...	...
154	100	80.00	AMT Inc	37	...	...	9	2	4.81	Int Group	3	...	...
153	100	5.53	Amstar Inc	109	...	...	125	107	45.50	KS Bricks	106	+	...
152	100	21.00	Amstar Inc	14	...	...	32	19	37.75	KS Bricks	106	+	...
151	100	17.10	Arden Imaging	93	-1	...	180	107	23.20	Unicom Inc	106	+	...	
150	100	28.50	Arc Group	11	...	3.9	180	107	23.20	Unicom Inc	106	+	...	
149	100	11.50	Arc Group	11	...	...	250	250	60.70	Unicom Inc	106	+	...
148	100	51.20	Arc Group	11	...	...	250	250	60.70	Unicom Inc	106	+	...
147	100	14.00	Armstrong & B	112	...	0.8	250	250	60.70	Unicom Inc	106	+	...	
146	100	8.50	Armstrong & B	112	...	...	250	250	60.70	Unicom Inc	106	+	...
145	100	2.21	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
144	100	6.43	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
143	100	45.30	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
142	100	10.00	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
141	100	1.76	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
140	100	82.50	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
139	100	25.70	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
138	100	1.76	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
137	100	82.50	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
136	100	25.70	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
135	100	1.76	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
134	100	82.50	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
133	100	25.70	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
132	100	1.76	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
131	100	82.50	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
130	100	25.70	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
129	100	1.76	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
128	100	82.50	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
127	100	25.70	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
126	100	1.76	Arpa Online	51	-1	...	536	425	10.70	London	585	...	...
125	100													

Apple updates laptop

Apple Computer, the troubled US manufacturer, today unveils a new PowerBook laptop, updated Power Macintosh desktop computers, new digital camera and a laptop for children.

The products are part of Apple's three-year plan to increase sales. It said that its new PowerBook 3400, priced from \$4,500 to \$6,500, is one of the fastest laptops ever built and features the speedy PowerPC 603e microprocessor, a built-in modem and four-speaker sound.

Apple also will unveil updated models in its Power Macintosh computers aimed at business users and desktop publishers. For the education market, it will introduce the eMate 300, a laptop based on its hand-held Newton computer. The company will also put on show the QuickTake 200, a \$600 digital camera that records photographs in computer memory.

Care campaign

Christian Action Research (Care), an action group campaigning for family rights, is lobbying Parliament for an increase in the married couple's allowance, which it claims has decreased substantially in real terms. Care points out that in the last Budget the personal allowance was increased by £200 more than inflation, while the married couple's allowance was increased in line with inflation. It wants the increase to be the same.

Motoring rise

Motor insurance premiums rose by an average 5 to 10 per cent in 1996 and are set to rise by the same amount again this year, according to Touchline Insurance. It says insurers have been gradually increasing premiums using specialist underwriting techniques and accurate risk-profiling.

Athletic Grade

Michael Grade, newly appointed chairman of First Leisure, is joining the board of Charlton Athletic Football Club as non-executive director. He is described as a lifelong supporter. Charlton is to seek a listing on the Alternative Investment Market and expects to raise £6 million to fund the redevelopment of its Valley stadium in London.

Airlines link

Air UK and KLM, the Dutch airline, are to combine sales and marketing operations in Britain. The joint venture, fully operational from April 1, will have an annual turnover of about £400 million. Air UK and KLM have a total of 69 flights a day from 18 UK airports to Amsterdam, connecting to more than 150 cities via Amsterdam's Schiphol airport on the KLM network.



Jon Foulds and Mike Blackburn are hoping to see a good turnout from Halifax members at next week's special meeting at the Sheffield Arena

Halifax pleased with response of members in conversion vote

By MARIANNE CURFHEY

MILLIONS of Halifax members are expected to have cast their vote in favour of the building society's conversion into a bank by close of business today.

It is the culmination of a huge advertising campaign aimed at reminding Halifax's eight million customers to return their voting forms. The Halifax has declined to give details of the way the voting has gone, but management has pronounced it is "pleased with the response" so far.

Jon Foulds, chairman, and Mike Blackburn, chief executive, will be keen for as many people as possible to attend its special meeting in a week's time at Sheffield Arena, where they will be able to vote in person. A spokeswoman for the society emphasised that all members needed to vote. The Sheffield Arena holds 11,000.

Monday February 24 is also an important date for members who have more than £1,000 in their accounts on November 24, 1994, because they need to top up their balances to qualify for the variable distribution of shares. The shareout will be based on the lower of two

balances, either November 25, 1994, or February 24, 1997. Halifax will begin mailing qualifying members next month with details of its share-dealing service. Up to 20 per cent of members are expected to sell their shares, worth an average £1,300, on the first day of trading. Shares will be priced at between 390p and 450p.

Rob Thomas, building society analyst with UBS, believes

the shares could be worth more if the housing market continues to be buoyant. "At present, Abbey National shares have been in demand because the market is buying them as a proxy for converting societies, since Abbey was the first building society to convert in 1989," he said.

Gary Marsh, assistant general manager of the Halifax, said more details about the share-dealing service would

be sent to members next month. They will be asked whether they want to sell or keep shares by ticking a box. Free dealing will be available for a limited period, although only members who wish to buy shares will be able to do so by telephone. Those who wish to sell via the Halifax dealing service will have to use the postal service.

Meanwhile, the Woolwich is on course to float by July 7, after last week's vote in favour of the conversion. Some 70 per cent of investing members who were entitled to vote did so, and of these, 95 per cent backed the proposals.

The society is expected to have a market capitalisation of £3 billion. The 257 million qualifying members will get payouts worth an average £1,200. The basic distribution will be 450 shares, priced between 175p and 200p.

US legal threat to swap contracts

By JASON NISSE

BILLIONS of pounds of swap contracts could be under threat unless US law is amended to take account of European Monetary Union.

Under swap deals, different securities are exchanged to get more advantageous exchange and interest rates.

The International Swaps and Derivatives Association (ISDA) is hoping to put proposals for a change in the law to the New York State legisla-

ture in Albany in the next few weeks.

It needs to have the law in place in order to alter the master agreements that govern more than 90 per cent of the world's hundreds of billions of pounds of swap contracts, otherwise there is a danger that swap deals involving European currencies and written under US law might become invalid after 1999 when EMU starts.

However the ISDA is encountering problems because of the complexity of the change in the law, and the concern that a poorly worded law could leave loopholes under which people who suffer as the result of swap contracts could sue the other side of the deal.

The majority of swap deals are covered by either UK or US law. The UK deals do not have a problem because of a change to the Treaty of Rome

agreed in December which ensures continuity of contract for deals struck in individual European currencies once they combine to form the Euro.

The securities markets are concerned that EMU will cost them heavily and bring a big fall in business. Other legal problems could hit over £50 billion of bonds issued in Eu before 1992, when the Maastricht treaty was signed.

Windfall Bill makes progress

By MARIANNE CURFHEY



French: sharing the spoils

ELDERLY widows and disabled people came a step nearer to inclusion in building society windfall shareouts after the Commons success of a Private Member's Bill.

The draft Building Societies Bill, piloted by Douglas French, Conservative MP for Gloucester, will receive its first reading in the Lords today, followed by a second debate on February 28.

If successful, it would restore the rights of the elderly and disabled to share in the spoils of converting societies. Most have been excluded because they are not the first named on the account, and

societies have consistently claimed that only first-named account holders are members.

Last August *The Times* exposed the plight of residents in nursing homes, hospitals and hostels who were unable to operate their own building society accounts and missed out on windfalls.

Mr French said: "There is now a strong possibility that this Bill could go on the statute book, although it will not be retrospective. However, if it does become law, it will be difficult for societies which converted this year to continue to ignore the plight of members they have excluded."

Currency strength may spark pressure to reduce base rate

Gilts have come back into favour in recent weeks, with the spread against German bunds down by about 20 basis points since the start of the year. This rerating of gilts is probably has much further to go. We expect the gilt-bund spread to collapse to about 100 basis points by the year-end, from about 170 now.

If German yields maintain current levels, this process of yield convergence could bring long gilt yields well below 7 per cent late this year. On the more likely assumption that a modest recovery in German growth pushes up bund yields, convergence will probably happen via higher German yields rather than lower gilt yields.

Gilts are likely to benefit from two main factors. First, sterling's rise will cause inflation to sharply undershoot consensus expectations this year and in 1998. Second, an incoming Labour Government will probably take a cautious policy line, so confirming that UK political risks are modest.

The consensus view is that underlying inflation will stay around 3 per cent this year and rise to about 3.5 per cent next year. However, unless sterling falls sharply, we suspect that a collapse in import

prices will bring inflation below 2.5 per cent late this year and keep it around that mark in 1998.

Wage growth and profit margins are unlikely to rise sharply enough to offset the disinflationary impact of sterling's rise. Growth is modestly above trend, but the economy is not yet hitting capacity limits. In particular, the CBI survey of skilled labour shortages remains below its average level. The high level of job vacancies, which, on the surface, might imply that the jobs market is stretched, is significantly exaggerated by data problems stemming from the

same tax rates, and probably the same inflation target (this has yet to be officially confirmed). Indeed, in its early stages, a Labour Government would probably be more willing to raise base rates to keep inflation low, if needed, than the current administration.

Similarly, Labour's desire to keep the option of joining EMU will mandate a tight fiscal stance. If new fiscal tightening is needed, for example to offset some slippage on public spending or to hasten the decline in the fiscal deficit, Labour has plenty of scope to raise revenues by cutting tax allowances — notably Advance Cor-

poration Tax relief. The scale of UK political risks is much less than it was ten years ago when the Conservative and Labour parties seemed to have significantly different aims for inflation, public finances, and the share of public spending and tax in GDP.

The Bank of England is unlikely to get its desired base rate hike before the election. Even so, a relatively modest post-election rise, probably of 0.5 or 0.75 per cent, should be enough to ensure that inflation stays low further out. Assuming that sterling stays around current levels, base rates will probably level off and stay below 7 per cent next year.

This scenario, in which a rising currency dampens inflation expectations and supports bonds, has already been seen over the past year in Italy and Sweden. In both cases, the central banks initially downplayed the rise in the currency, and markets continue to price in higher short rates. Subsequently, as weak import prices brought inflation down, market projections for the future path of short-term interest rates fell sharply.

The Bank of England argued in last week's *Inflation Report* that sterling might fall if base rates do not rise as much as markets price in. Recent events in Italy and Sweden offer a clear counter-example, with both countries experiencing a mix of a rising currency and lower bond yields. Indeed, in both Italy and Sweden, currency strength and low inflation eventually prompted the central banks to shift from raising rates to cutting them.

If sterling rises much further, and approaches its old ERM central rate, the same could happen in the UK.

MICHAEL SAUNDERS
Salomon Brothers

EMU success or failure is in the balance

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

THE pros and cons of going forward with Economic and Monetary Union are too finely balanced to conclude that the project will either condemn Europe to failure or guarantee its success, a report published by *The Economic Intelligence Unit* today concludes.

In a detailed analysis of arguments for and against EMU, author Professor David Currie of the London Business School outlines four major threats:

□ Despite the attempts of the Maastricht treaty and the stability pact to enforce budgetary discipline, there is a possibility that government debt levels throughout the EMU area will remain high. This could keep interest rates high for all countries and inhibit investment and growth. Governments could be compelled to raise taxes or cut spending as the economy moves into recession, thus exacerbating the downturn.

□ A potentially greater danger is the "Europeanisation" of labour markets across the EMU area. Professor Currie says that a plausible nightmare could be brought about by "greater and more harmonised regulation of Europe's labour markets through the strengthening and ossification of the EU's social chapter". He argues that, in conditions of high unemployment, it is necessary that the social chapter evolves in a way consistent with labour market flexibility.

□ The euro itself could prove a volatile, if not a weak currency. There is a risk of erratic policy changes in the longer-term when conflicts arise between national representatives on the European Central Bank and member state governments.

□ The EU may fail to address the issue of enlargement of the union to the East, which Professor Currie says is perhaps the greater strategic challenge facing Europe at the present time. He argues that preoccupation with EMU is delaying attention to this issue.

Professor Currie also details some of the major potential gains from a successful EMU: □ Because of the attention paid to the design of the ECB, the euro countries are likely to enjoy low and stable inflation.

The drawback is that governments lose the ability to respond to economic circumstances by changing their own interest rates or letting their currencies depreciate.

□ The single market could be reborn as the single currency removes the costs and uncertainties of intra-European trade.

□ The euro would strengthen competitive pressures in the banking industry, potentially lowering prices and giving consumers more choice.

□ Opportunities for investment funds would increase as pension funds and insurance companies, for example, spread their portfolios beyond their own domestic frontiers.

Barclays set for buyback

By OUR CITY STAFF

BARCLAYS is widely expected to launch another buyback of shares tomorrow when the banking group reports full-year pre-tax profits of about £2.4 billion.

With its last three results announcements, Barclays has stemmed the build-up of surplus capital by buying back a total of almost £1 billion of shares. It spent just over £300 million after last February's results, and a further £470 million last August. Analysts with Salomon Brothers expect Barclays to spend £650 million on buybacks this year. The first instalment is likely to come tomorrow.

Some have forecast Barclays to have made £2.5 billion last year, putting it on a par with Lloyds TSB, which began the bank reporting season on Friday.

However, Barclays de Zoete Wedd, the investment banking arm, looks set to disappoint. Costs are thought to have risen sharply and dealing income to have been dull.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

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2

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Garnett loses by a whisker

DARE to mention Virgin in the head office of Sea Containers... First, Christopher Garnett, chief executive of Great North Eastern Railway, owned by the conglomerate, loses out to Richard Branson in the bidding for the plan InterCity West Coast rail franchise.

Next, Garnett is horribly delayed travelling back from Boston on one of the bearded ones brightly coloured planes and misses a crucial meeting with Scottish passenger representatives in Edinburgh. "Once is forgivable but twice is beginning to look like enemy action," snarls our man at Sea Containers.

On cloud nine

JOHN BENTLEY is celebrating in the skies after announcing a marketing partnership with Acorn Computer Group. The smooth-talking CEO of ViewCall Europe is selling the idea of using your television, instead of your pc, to surf the Internet. Not bad for someone who can't remember when he last watched TV. "I'm forever on long-haul flights," he says. "I spend so much time on the phone up there, they're thinking of naming a satellite after me."



Bentley: high-flyer

RAILTRACK shareholders will be delighted to hear of its philanthropic endeavours. To protect foxes, rabbits, mice and hedgehogs, Railtrack has installed tailor-made subways under the Heathrow Express high-speed rail link. The tunnels vary in size and come with hiding places "to ensure that smaller animals are not eaten by larger ones as they pass through".

The late show

THE two film producers who last year raised £400,000 from the public to film a Thomas Hardy story are at it again. Daniel Figuero and Zygi Kamassa are on the lookout for 750 angels to cough up £100,000 for their version of Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*. Sadly for anyone who wants a peek at *The Scarlet Tunic* before they put money into this year's venture, they will have to wait until the preview at the Cannes film festival — after the March 14 deadline for investors. "This is for tax reasons, because people will want to invest any spare funds ahead of the new financial year, starting in April," Kamassa says.

MORAG PRESTON



Charlie "Copperfingers" Vincent has consistently denied any wrongdoing and has promised the SFO every co-operation with its inquiries

Struggle to get to the bottom of the copper scandal

Yasuo Hamanaka, who goes on trial today, may be the only one to face prosecution over the Sumitomo affair. Robert Miller explains why

No one will take a keener interest in the trial of Yasuo Hamanaka, once the uncrowned king of the world's copper markets, than our own Serious Fraud Office. In the dock of a Japanese court room today Mr Hamanaka, the former chief copper trader at Sumitomo, the Japanese trading conglomerate, will face charges of forging documents and fraud in relation to his global copper dealings that left his employers facing losses of about \$2.8 billion. Many of these trades were routed through British and American broking houses.

The evidence given by Mr Hamanaka will be pored over in minute detail by criminal and civil investigators in the UK and the United States. It will be the first time they have heard his side of the story. It was in June last year that Sumitomo made the shock announcement about its losses. Since then, however, in spite of visits to Japan by officials from the Securities and Investments Board, the City's most senior watchdog, together with Andrew Jackson, the SFO lawyer heading the criminal investigation, and officers from the City of London fraud squad, no one has had a chance to question the man at the centre of events.

The copper investigation is one of the largest and most complex of its kind ever undertaken and spans at least four jurisdictions — the UK, Japan, the US and Chile, where the affair began more than three years ago. Codelco, the Chilean state copper company, claimed that it had become the victim of a \$200 million fraud. Juan Pablo Davila, its former chief trader, is being held by the Chilean authorities. Some of Señor Davila's copper trades were executed by the Winchester Commodities Group, founded by Charlie "Copperfingers" Vincent and his less high-profile partner Ashley Levett, who owns Richmond Rugby Union Club. Both men have homes in the UK and Monte Carlo.

The Securities and Futures Authority (SFA), the UK watchdog for brokers and futures traders, began a lengthy investigation, headed by Alan King, one of the City's most experi-

enced civil investigators, into the Winchester trades with Codelco. At its conclusion last year the SFA said that on the evidence it had to date no further action would be taken against Winchester or its directors, who are reputed to have earned £15 million in a single year.

The SFA investigation broadened because the Winchester name kept cropping up in connection with another company, Sumitomo. The trail then led to Guernsey and in May last year, the SIB, using its broader powers on behalf of the SFA, asked the Guernsey authorities to raid a number of offices in the offshore haven. The evidence seized was to have far-

reaching consequences, the effects of which are still rumbling on in the UK courts.

Today the UK civil authorities, including the London Metal Exchange, which first flagged concerns about Mr Hamanaka and his copper trades to Sumitomo and the Japanese authorities in 1991, as did the SIB, are still trying to piece together the deals done by Mr Hamanaka with UK firms. That task could take years because many trades were done through offshore centres — a perfectly legitimate tactic to throw rivals off the scent — and not through the London exchange.

The SFO, for its part, continues to

look for any evidence of fraud, or more probably a conspiracy to commit fraud, carried out in the UK jurisdiction. If none is found, and that is certainly a possibility, then the fraud office could offer its evidence to any other country wanting to mount a prosecution in connection with the copper scandal. In August last year officers from the SFO, which formally began its copper inquiry last June, executed search warrants at the UK homes of Mr Vincent and Mr Levett, who have consistently denied any wrongdoing. Both have promised every co-operation with the fraud office investigation.

Documents seized in the Guernsey raid threw up a number of names besides those of the Winchester directors and this led to another SFO raid being carried out last December on the offices of Kay Accounting, a small book-keeping and accountancy firm, based in Radlett, Hertfordshire.

Here, however, the SFO met an unexpected obstacle. Goldsmiths, Kay's law firm, successfully applied for an immediate injunction to stop the SFO downloading computer information until a judicial review hearing. The material was then bagged and secured pending the full court hearing. Kay Accounting argued that the SFO search warrant, which was looking for any information connected with the copper investigation, was too widely drawn and that the firm had 250 clients, many of whom had no link with copper but whose papers were nonetheless seized.

In an audacious and unprecedented move, Kay also personally accused George Staple, the SFO director, and four of his senior colleagues of contempt of court for continuing to "download" computer-held material in spite of a court order to stop. Earlier this month two high court judges cleared the SFO executives of contempt, but the warrant was quashed. Thus the SFO has been put on notice.

At the end of the day the Sumitomo copper investigation is so complex, spanning so many jurisdictions, it is entirely possible that Mr Hamanaka, who has indicated that he will plead guilty to certain charges, may be the only person to be prosecuted.



Yasuo Hamanaka has indicated that he will plead guilty to certain charges

CHRONOLOGY OF THE COPPER CRISIS

□ NOVEMBER 1991: The International Wrought Copper Council (IWCC), representing the industry, asks the London Metal Exchange to investigate distortions in the market. LME stocks are at seven-year highs of 315,000 tonnes, but prices are also rising. David Threlkeld, president of David L. Threlkeld and Co, asks the LME to investigate a letter in which Hamanaka asked him to confirm fictitious trades. The LME informs the Securities and Investments Board. US authorities are also informed.

□ SEPTEMBER 1993: LME follows up two public warnings on copper by re-

stricting daily backwardation to \$5 a tonne "in anticipation of the development of an undesirable situation". A squeeze was attributed by traders to a futures and options strategy by Sumitomo, its any attempt at manipulation.

□ APRIL 1995: LME opens copper warehouses in the United States. By December stocks will soar above 60,000 tonnes, again largely controlled by Sumitomo.

□ NOVEMBER 1995: IWCC again voices concerns. LME investigates. David King, chief executive, seeks information on client positions and credit lines.

□ DECEMBER 1995: British regulators start an investigation of the market. Prices fall by some \$250 per tonne. America's Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) contacts the SIB.

□ MAY 17, 1996: Rumours circulate that Hamanaka has moved from his post.

□ MAY 21: Copper prices fall to \$2,570 from above \$2,600 the previous day. Sumitomo says Hamanaka has been promoted to another post. Five million tonnes of copper cleared during May 17-20 trade.

□ JUNE 5: Sumitomo finds evidence of unauthorised trading, it later discloses.

□ JUNE 6: Price crashes from \$2,578 to \$1,680 with more than one million tonnes of copper cleared during early trading.

□ JUNE 11: New rumours say Hamanaka has resigned. Price falls \$200 a tonne. Sumitomo denies rumour the next day.

□ JUNE 12: IWCC writes to the LME, expressing concern over market volatility. LME announces that it shares the concerns and confirms it has been in contact with regulators.

□ JUNE 13: Sumitomo reports \$1.8 billion loss on unauthorised copper trades and says it has sacked Hamanaka.

□ JUNE 20: Sumitomo says losses caused by Hamanaka could leave it up to 150 billion yen (\$1.3 billion) in the red.

□ SEPTEMBER 19: Sumitomo says losses have grown to \$2.6 billion. The company is to seek criminal charges against Hamanaka.

□ OCTOBER 22: Hamanaka is arrested in Japan after Sumitomo files a complaint that he forged documents authorising copper trades.

□ NOVEMBER 13: Hamanaka is served with second arrest warrant accusing him of fraud, a more serious charge than forgery.

□ FEBRUARY 17, 1997: Hamanaka's trial begins.

A new way to start your day

The Mark Radcliffe Breakfast Show, Radio 1, 7.00am.

Life after Chris Evans begins today with Radcliffe moved from late nights to early mornings and charged with the huge task of trying to hold the 700,000 or so audience increase that Evans brought about. Radcliffe will broadcast from his native Manchester and, interestingly, the start time remains 7am: one of the spots to Evans during his reign was moving the start back from 6.30am. Other schedule changes from today include Mary Anne Hobbs taking over Radcliffe's former show at 10.30pm, Kevin Greening moving from weeknights to the daily drivetime slot at 4pm and Andy Kershaw being given the evening show at 8.30pm. But Radcliffe's slot is the key audience-builder.

You Is What You Eat, Radio 3, 9.20pm.

Almost all developed countries are involved in a *guerre de cuisine* in which universal tastes imposed by multinational outlets threaten to destroy regional dishes and scupper the variety from our diets. Britain is a prime example and France is heading the same way but the United States is the country where uniformity is most in evidence. Not that its regions are giving up without a fight. In this series of five programmes, Russell Davies travels from North Carolina to Texas and finds a rich variety of food, cooking styles and indeed arguments. Even the barbecue is a battlefield, with heated debate on everything from sauces to the right type of wood. Peter Barnard

RADIO 1	WORLD SERVICE
7.00am Mark Radcliffe. See Choice 8.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Jo Whiley 2.00pm Nicky Campbell 4.00pm John Gidding 6.15 Newsline 6.30 Evening Session 8.30 Andy Kershaw 10.30 Mary Anne Hobbs 1.00am Claire Staggles 4.00 Dave Warren	All times in GMT. News on the hour. 5.30am Europe Today 6.30 Europe Today 7.15 On the Spot 7.30 The Village Chart Show 8.10 Words of Faith 8.15 International Radio 9.05 World Business Report 8.15 Anything Goes 9.45 Sports Roundup 10.30 BBC English 10.45 Off the Shelf 11.30 Omnibus 12.05pm World Business Report 12.15 Britain Today 12.30 Andy Kershaw 2.05 Outlook 2.30 John Peel 3.05 Sports Roundup 3.15 The Learning World 3.30 Omnibus 4.15 World Today 4.30 BBC English 4.45 Britain Today 5.30 World Business Report 5.45 Sports Roundup 6.30 Just a Minute 7.01 Outlook 7.25 Words of Faith 7.30 Multiback 8.05 World Business Report 8.15 Britain Today 8.30 Money on the Move 8.45 How to Listen 10.30 World Today 10.45 Sports Roundup 11.10 Take Five 11.15 Record News 11.30 Multiback 12.30am Global Contents 12.45 Britain Today 1.30 Outlook 1.55 Words of Faith 2.30 Omnibus 3.15 Sports Roundup 3.30 Meridian Feature 4.30 Europe Today
RADIO 2	CLASSIC FM
6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up To Wogan 9.30 Ken Bruce 11.30 Anne Robinson 1.30pm Debbie Thompson 3.00 Ed Stewart 5.05 John Dunn 7.00 Steve Wright at the Movies 7.30 Melvin Laycock with Dance Band Days 8.30 Big Band Special 9.00 Humphrey Littler 10.00 Radio Days. The BBC Big Band recovers from American disaster band broadcasts (4/5) 10.30 The Jamieson 12.05am Steve Macdonald 3.00 Alex Lester, Includes Pulse for Thought	4.00am Mark Griffiths 6.00 Miles Road 9.00 Henry Kelly 12.00 Susannah Simons 2.00pm Concert. Beethoven (Violin Concerto in D major, Op 11) 3.00 Jamie Cullum 7.00 Newsnight 7.30 Sonnets. Boccherini (Cello Sonata in A major) 8.00 Evening Concert. German (Three Duets from Violin Concerto, 1815) 8.30 Concert. Valeriy (Concerto in A minor, Op 7 No 1 in C) 10.00 Michael Mappin 1.00am Mel Cooper
RADIO 3	VIRGIN RADIO
5.00am Morning Reports 6.00 The Breakfast Programme. Includes 6.55 Racing Preview 9.00 The Magazine, with Diana Maitland 12.00 Midday with Mel. Includes at 12.25pm Moneyweek 2.05 Race on Five, includes at 3.45 Entertainment News 4.00 John Inverdale 5.00am BBC English 5.45 Britain Today 6.30 World Business Report 6.45 Sports Roundup 7.01 Outlook 7.25 Words of Faith 7.30 Multiback 8.05 World Business Report 8.15 Britain Today 8.30 Money on the Move 8.45 How to Listen 10.30 World Today 10.45 Sports Roundup 11.10 Take Five 11.15 Record News 11.30 Multiback 12.30am Global Contents 12.45 Britain Today 1.30 Outlook 1.55 Words of Faith 2.30 Omnibus 3.15 Sports Roundup 3.30 Meridian Feature 4.30 Europe Today	6.00am Russ "I" John 10.00 Graham Dene 1.00pm Jeremy Clark 4.00 Nicky Home 7.00 Paul Coyte (FM) / Robin Banks (AM) 10.00 Mark Forest 2.00am Randal Lee Rose
RADIO 4	
6.00am On Air. Includes Haydn (Symphony No 6 in D); Mozart (Piano Concerto No 19 in A); Weber (Cello Concerto in G) 9.00 Morning Collection. Includes Weber (Overture: Der Freischütz); Chopin (Two Nocturnes, Op 48) 10.00 Musical Encounters, with Mary Miller, includes Mozart (Divertimento in D); Caplet (Caplet for Three Voices and String Quartet) 12.00 Composer of the Week: Pizzini 1.00pm News; BBC Lunchtime Concert. Live from St John's, Smith Square, London (String Quartet in D minor); Stravinsky (Three Pieces) 2.00 From the Front. Another chance to hear the New York Philharmonic under Kurt Masur. Strauss (Till Eulenspiegel); Tchaikovsky (Symphony No 5 in E minor) 3.45 Voices (r) 4.30 Hoagy's Jazz (3/4) (r) 5.00 Music Machine (r)	5.15 In Tune. Includes Poulenc (L'Embarquement pour Cythère); Mozart (Piano Concerto No 21 in C, K467); Bernard Herrmann (Film Music: Fahrenheit 451) 7.30 Singing the Country. Live from St John's, Smith Square, London. Eileen Hawke, soprano; Stravinsky (Ragtime); Symonowicz (Symphony of a Fairy-tale Princess); Milhaud (La création du monde) 8.10 Postmark: The State of the Art 8.30 Concert part 2: Vivier (Lorely Child); Varese (Intégrales) 9.20 You Is What You Eat. See Choice (1/5) 9.45 Delaney and Pauris. Played by Steven Isserlis, cello, and Paul Coker, piano 10.00 Encounters, includes Arnsky (Suite No 2, 25 minutes); Rachmaninov (Suite No 1) 10.45 Interview with Mark Russell (Symphonies of the Week: Robert Schumann (r) 12.30am Jazz Notes 1.00 Through the Night
RADIO 5	
5.55am Shipping (LW) 6.00 News Briefing 6.10 Farming Today 6.25 Prayer for the Day 6.30 Today 8.45 Letters from Here and There 8.58 Weather 9.00 News 9.05 Start the Week, with Times columnist Melvyn Bragg and guests 10.00 News; Big Bang (FM). Jez Nelson examines the evidence for extra-terrestrials 10.00 Daily Service (LW) 10.15 On This Day (LW) 10.30 Women's Hour 11.30 Money Box Live 0171-580 4444 Personal finance news 12.00 News; You and Yours (FM) 12.25pm Coast-to-coast Weather 1.00 The World at One 1.40 The Archers (FM) (r) 2.00 News; Staters, by Tina Popler. Domestic drama, starring Haydn Gwynne and Sarah Jane Holt 3.00 The Afternoon Shift 4.00 News 4.05 Kaleidoscope. Lynne Walker reviews Serg's Wozzack recorded live at the Bull's Opera 4.45 Short Story: What Women Want, by David Benedictus	5.00 PM Shipping: Weather 6.00 Six O'Clock News 6.30 Just a Minute (r) 7.00 News 7.05 The 7.20 The Food Programme (r) 7.45 The Monday Play: The Littered Beavers, by Ronald Firbank. A drama set in a small town on the Solway coast in the early 1950s 9.00 On the Hook. The first in series of three profiles of equestrian characters (r) 9.30 Kaleidoscope (r) 9.58 Weather 10.00 The World Tonight 10.45 Book at Bedtime: House of Splendid Isolation (6/10) (r) 11.00 The Trade Rag (FM). Nick Baker takes a look behind the scenes of the Times Educational Supplement (4/5) (r) 11.00 Education Matters (LW) 11.30 King Solomon's Carpet (FM) (2/4) (r) 11.35pm Today in Parliament (LW) 12.00 News and 12.27am Weather 12.30am Late Book: Regeneration (6/10) (r) 12.45 Short Story: What Women Want, by David Benedictus 1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.6. LW 198. MW 198 (12.45-5.55pm). CLASSIC FM. FM 100.2. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8. MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1053, 1093. Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McManus.

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Final rib-tickers from the Saxon joke-book

It is a long time since I read *Ivanhoe*, so I have forgotten. Does Queen Eleanor really call her sons a pair of "coddled-brain ninnies" and go on to describe Prince John as a "miserable little runt"? I suppose she must. It's not the sort of thing that even a television adaptor would make up — is it?

But accurate or otherwise, Queen Eleanor's windswept admonishment of her sons was just one of several scenes that sent the final episode of *Ivanhoe* (BBC1) teetering close to farce and its audience to bed nursing a vague feeling of "is that it?"

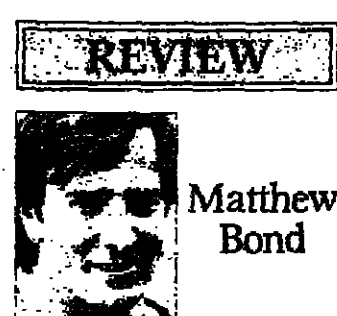
"We've sung three masses for his soul already," moaned one tired and emotional monk to another as Athelstane's very considerable body lay in state. "Well, he was a terrible sinner." "Born, born," Mother Athelstane woke up. "Mother," he cried as he stumbled into his own wake. His mother did

what any sensible woman would do when approached by something horribly hairy wrapped in a burial shroud, and fainting, leaving plenty of room for her happily revived son to do his impersonation of Hymen. Of course Rowena must still marry Ivanhoe, he said with a saintly smile — and by the way, he didn't want to be king much, either. Two sub-plots down: on the ending. But not before Deborah Cook, *Ivanhoe*'s adaptor, and Stuart Orme, the director, had conspired again for easy laughs. "I am not with child..." said Rowena, finishing her sentence with a non-pregnant pause. "Give it time," replied her maid, "he's been injured." Boom, boom.

Now there is long Shakespearean tradition of delivering a line to maximise its modern comic meaning, and once or twice might have been fine. But Cook's version of Walter Scott's novel has been liberally littered with them, keep-

ing a smile on the faces of a lazy Sunday-night audience but detracting horribly from the hard work that the cast was putting in elsewhere. Ciaran Hinds and Susan Lynch as Bois-Guilbert and Rebecca, for instance, were acting their tabards off trying to make religious bigotry and repetitive dialogue look interesting. "Come with me," "No." Sub-plot three dealt with.

But as our hapless hero was condemned to spend the final episode transferring his affections at Scott's will (Rebecca's dead, I'll marry Rowena — oops, no she isn't, better go and fight for her immortal soul), there were fine performances to look back on elsewhere, particularly Ralph Brown's wonderfully weaselly Prince John. Peter Guinness's scheming Montfitcher and David Horroch as Isaac of York. As for Christopher Lee, well, no one sends virgins to the stake quite like



Matthew Bond

him, do they? "Your shift will burn first, of course," he purred, as Rebecca shivered in the special nightie they keep for television witches, and then all men will gaze upon the fleshy shape that Lucifer has given you for their seduction." You could see why they'd made him Grand Master.

A turkey, they say, is for Christmas. Certainly not for life and

certainly not for the first weekend in Lent, when no one was drinking the quantities needed to make *Gobbie* (BBC1, Saturday) funny.

Ian Hislop and Nick Newman's comedy was postponed from Christmas because an outbreak of *E. Coli* poisoning suddenly made it unfunny. But this, alas, was not a seasonal thing. *Gobbie* just wasn't funny.

As intended satire, its content was too close to the intended target for there to be any room left for comedy. If beef can kill you, what's so funny about turkey proving similarly lethal, especially when that premise is backed up by a flimsy script called (if that's the right word) from newspaper headlines?

Humour had not deserted Hislop and Newman entirely and there were some nice moments, the best of them at the expense of long-standing Hislop targets such as tearful huffies (stars of stage and

screen holding a midnight vigil for turkeys) and *Hello!* magazine (Arthur Hedley gives us a tour of his delightful slaughtering facilities). But if the overall assembly jarred and proved at least half an hour too long, it was one or two times that really made you wince. The first victim was 99 years old. "Just missed out on her telegram from the Queen," joked the pathologist. But that had them rolling in the aisles in the care homes and day centres of central Scotland.

But just when you're ready to give up on the BBC drama department altogether, along comes something like *Silent Witness* (BBC1, Friday) and you're duty bound to give it a second chance. It seemed like years since I had seen a police series that upped with several scenes that made no sense at all. Time was when all police dramas used to start like that, but not any more —

- BBC1**
- 6.00am Business Breakfast (54807)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (7) (87825)
9.00 Breakfast News Extra (1) (8691543)
9.20 Style Challenge (1821982)
9.45 Kilroy (8696746)
10.30 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (48476)
11.00 News (7) and weather (8272447)
11.05 The Really Useful Show (3240988)
11.35 Change That (5177727)
12.00 News (7) and weather (8274475)
12.05pm The Alphabet Game (5850543)
12.30 Going for a Song (7141678)
12.55 The Weather Show (3425824)
1.00 News (7) and weather (17302)
1.30 Regional News (8182307)
1.40 Neighbours (7) (2075108)
2.05 FILM: Hi Honey, I'm Dead (1991) with Celia Armstrong, Catherine Hicks and Kevin Connolly. A less-than-honest businessman is given the chance to redeem his past life through a series of tests. (7) (5027122)
3.30 Playdays (1560388) 3.50 Pingu (2655949) 3.55 Gadget and Gadget (7357253) 4.10 Gadget Boy (9657562) 4.35 Record Breakers Gold (1) (6158456) 5.00 Newsround (1) (7015524) 5.10 Blue Peter (1) (1305098)
5.30 Neighbours (7) (1) (342611)
6.00 News (7) and weather (494)
6.30 Newsround South East (746)
7.00 This Is Your Life (1) (1494)
7.30 Here and Now News of the week (1) (830)
8.00 EastEnders Phil sets out for the rehabilitation clinic (1) (7814)
8.30 The Brittas Empire An investigative journalist plans to make an exposé documentary on the centre (7) (8949)
9.00 News (7) and weather (8901)
9.30 Panorama: The Copper Ring A report on the trial of Yasuo Hamanaka, a copper dealer who lost his company billions (1) (77122)
10.10 Ruby Wax Meets Ruby talks to Bill Cosby and Fran Drescher, star of the new sitcom *The Nanny* (1) (486611)
10.40 Inman's Final Test — An Everyman Special A look at the life of Inman Khan, the former Pakistani cricket captain (970098) WALESH: 10.40 The State 11.20 A Parent's Guide. New series investigating the relationship between teachers, parents and pupils. 11.35 Film 97 12.05am Inman's Final Test 12.45 Welsh Questions 1.20 FILM: Cry Freedom
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1.20am-1.25 Weather (7325876)

- BBC2**
- 6.00am Open University: History: What is its Future? (6555901) 6.25 Simple Beginnings? (6574036) 6.50 A Guide to the English Language (5534862) 7.15 News (7) (8628389)
7.30 Secret Squid and Co (1527662) 7.55 Blue Peter (7) (7121727) 8.20 Pingu (1) (8693407) 8.35 Gadget and Gadget (1) (1404727) 8.35 Little (1) (9073652)
9.00 TBS (40533) 9.30 Pathways of Belief (8693389) 9.45 Technology Starters (3977543) 10.00 Playdays (56727) 10.30 Landmarks (4257659) 10.50 Look and Read (4270123) 11.10 Zig Zag (2270765) 11.30 Ghostwriter (7036) 12.00 Testament: The Bible in Animation (37363)
12.30pm Working Lunch (57611)
1.00 History File (1557747) 1.20 German Globo (8944601) 1.25 Landmarks (1555982) 1.45 Skyline (8169456)
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2.10 FILM: The Shanghai Gesture (1941, b/w) with Gene Tierney, Walter Houston and Victor Mature. Thriller about passion and revenge. Directed by Josef von Sternberg (857494)
3.55 News (7) and weather (2675562) 4.00 Today's Day (559) 4.30 Ready, Steady, Cook (543) 5.00 Esther (9272) 5.30 Westminster with Nick Tice (123) 6.00 Space Report (842544)
6.45 People's Century: 1989 — People Power Charting the fall of the Eastern bloc (1) (388036)
7.40 The Laurence Olivier Awards 1997 Thespians will be out in force to congratulate each other. Among the contenders for honours are Smokey Joe's Cafe, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, Jesus Christ Superstar and Martin Guerre. Presented by Clive Anderson (83185)
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1.20am-1.25 Weather (7325876)

- BBC2**
- 6.00am Open University: History: What is its Future? (6555901) 6.25 Simple Beginnings? (6574036) 6.50 A Guide to the English Language (5534862) 7.15 News (7) (8628389)
7.30 Secret Squid and Co (1527662) 7.55 Blue Peter (7) (7121727) 8.20 Pingu (1) (8693407) 8.35 Gadget and Gadget (1) (1404727) 8.35 Little (1) (9073652)
9.00 TBS (40533) 9.30 Pathways of Belief (8693389) 9.45 Technology Starters (3977543) 10.00 Playdays (56727) 10.30 Landmarks (4257659) 10.50 Look and Read (4270123) 11.10 Zig Zag (2270765) 11.30 Ghostwriter (7036) 12.00 Testament: The Bible in Animation (37363)
12.30pm Working Lunch (57611)
1.00 History File (1557747) 1.20 German Globo (8944601) 1.25 Landmarks (1555982) 1.45 Skyline (8169456)
2.00 Pingu (1) (3396583) 2.05 Hazy Jeremy (1) (35964104)
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- BBC1**
- 6.00am Business Breakfast (54807)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (7) (87825)
9.00 Breakfast News Extra (1) (8691543)
9.20 Style Challenge (1821982)
9.45 Kilroy (8696746)
10.30 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (48476)
11.00 News (7) and weather (8272447)
11.05 The Really Useful Show (3240988)
11.35 Change That (5177727)
12.00 News (7) and weather (8274475)
12.05pm The Alphabet Game (5850543)
12.30 Going for a Song (7141678)
12.55 The Weather Show (3425824)
1.00 News (7) and weather (17302)
1.30 Regional News (8182307)
1.40 Neighbours (7) (2075108)
2.05 FILM: Hi Honey, I'm Dead (1991) with Celia Armstrong, Catherine Hicks and Kevin Connolly. A less-than-honest businessman is given the chance to redeem his past life through a series of tests. (7) (5027122)
3.30 Playdays (1560388) 3.50 Pingu (2655949) 3.55 Gadget and Gadget (7357253) 4.10 Gadget Boy (9657562) 4.35 Record Breakers Gold (1) (6158456) 5.00 Newsround (1) (7015524) 5.10 Blue Peter (1) (1305098)
5.30 Neighbours (7) (1) (342611)
6.00 News (7) and weather (494)
6.30 Newsround South East (746)
7.00 This Is Your Life (1) (1494)
7.30 Here and Now News of the week (1) (830)
8.00 EastEnders Phil sets out for the rehabilitation clinic (1) (7814)
8.30 The Brittas Empire An investigative journalist plans to make an exposé documentary on the centre (7) (8949)
9.00 News (7) and weather (8901)
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